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THE RELIGIOUS DEVELOPMENT OF ADOLESCENTS

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The Religious Development of Adolescents

based upon Their Literary Productions

BY

OSKAR KUPKY, PH.D. (LEIPZIG)

AUTHORIZED TRANSLATION WITH A PREFACE BY

WM. CLARK TROW

New York

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PREFACE

ADOLESCENCE is still an enigma. Although the word designates a period of development recognized as of sufficient importance to be attended by state and religious ceremony since earliest times, its nature, its boundaries, and its full significance have not as yet been satisfactorily established. The monumental work of G. Stanley Hall, though rich in suggestive detail, is condemned even more vociferously by those who have not read it than by those who have because of the fallacies of his method. And present-day scholars are uncertain whether to try to separate the wheat from the chaff, or to let his whole harvest rot in the barns and set out for fresh fields and pastures green.

Those which beckon the most temptingly just at present are perhaps indicated by the rapid development of the test and measurement movement. And surely it seems more the part of wisdom to employ a carefully controlled technique to investigate adolescence than to ask adults what they were like during that period, or even to ask adolescents themselves. For if psychology has discovered any one thing, it is the fact that we cannot trust ourselves, either as witnesses of another's behavior or as apologists of our own.

And yet the mental measurers have thus far unfortunately left unmeasured a large number of very important things; and the laboratory experimentalists

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have a long path ahead of them before they can pronounce with certainty concerning any period of human development. While these methods beyond a shadow of a doubt will eventually give us whatever of certainty we may attain to, meanwhile it is my great pleasure to introduce in this country the author of the present volume, in large measure because of the method he employs. It is a method which in my opinion will supplement our source material most helpfully, and which will assist materially in furnishing a better understanding of what is going on in the minds and hearts of our young people.

Dr. Oskar Kupky of Leipzig has seen the possibilities of this method and has made this preliminary study in religious development, a phase of adolescence which is perhaps the most striking, and which has already received some attention at the hands of such men as Leuba, James, and Starbuck. He has marshaled his data masterfully, not only analyzing differences between his subjects but also following the growth of individuals, thus furnishing a genetic contribution of no mean value.

One of the most obvious limitations of the method, one which Dr. Kupky clearly recognizes, is that a selected group is studied. Not every one pours his whole soul into a diary. In order to discover approximately how narrow this selection is, I inquired in four classes of educational psychology, a course required here of juniors who are preparing to teach, how many had kept or do keep diaries of the personal sort, journals in which they confide. I had expected to find that perhaps three or four out of a hundred thus recorded their inmost feelings. What was my amazement, therefore, to discover that, out of these 122 college

juniors, 63 or 60 per cent have kept or are keeping such diaries and that 21 per cent still do. So that, while we are dealing with a select group, it is one which at least comprises no inconsiderable portion of our college population. I trust that the value of this work, therefore, will be recognized, as the author suggests, as a contribution to the psychology of adolescence, and that it will also bring assistance to those who are confronted with the vexed problems of religious adjustment.

I wish here to express my appreciation of the more than nominal assistance given in the preparation of this translation by Mr. F. C. Knapp, and also to thank Miss S. C. Clark who has read the manuscript with a view to including such changes as would more nearly represent the real meaning and spirit of the original. The rhymed and metered (I dare not say poetic) translations of the adolescent verses are ventured with the feeling that their spirit would thus be better conveyed. In them I have kept close to the German, even declining to smooth out lines in translation which were a bit irregular in the original.

W. C. T.

Ann Arbor, Michigan
June 30, 1927

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INTRODUCTION

THE psychology of adolescence is the youngest branch of German psychology, even younger than that of child psychology; and the religious development of the adolescent is one of its most recent special investigations. This accounts both for certain merits and certain defects in this work. The main investigation was brought to a close in 1922; the printing was delayed, however, in consequence of the unpropitious economic circumstances following the war. This introduction is therefore added to classify what has since been done as well as to indicate the author's present understanding of the religion of youth.

The beginnings of a scientific psychology of the child are to be found in the eighteenth century, when the great teachers, though they undoubtedly knew the child mind, set forth their experiences in a somewhat incidental fashion. The first systematic presentation we discover in David Tiedmann's *Beobachten über die Entwicklung der Seeligfähigkeiten bei Kindern* (Observations of the Development of the Mental Capacities in Children) of the year 1787. Not till after a long interval did there follow, in 1856, R. Sigismund's book, *Kind und Welt* (The Child and the World). General psychology, which received considerable impetus from the researches of Wilhelm Wundt, in Germany, enriched child psychology but little. To be sure, the great master of experimental

psychology at the very beginning of his scientific labors had been impressed with the importance of a historical, genetic method of studying mental life. And in his later work in animal and folk psychology Wundt did treat of these beginnings in the individual man, but only on a small scale. Still, for a long time there prevailed in scientific psychology the method of generalizing observations; and not until later did investigators learn to deal with mental irregularities. First viewed as a source of error, these came finally to be recognized as constituting a problem in themselves; as William Stern put it: "Mental differences have as much claim to psychological investigation as the usual data." Hence the justification of a special psychology of different age levels came to be recognized in theory.

The investigation of the child mind began in the eighties of the last century, independently of the efforts of scientific psychology in the narrower sense; and since that time, child psychology has come rapidly forward. We know something of the psychology of the little child from birth to the beginning of school years, thanks to the observations of parents and relatives. After the pioneer work of W. Preyer in 1882 in *Die Seele des Kindes* (The Mind of the Child), there followed the valuable monographs of Clara and William Stern, E. and G. Scupin, A. W. Shinn, K. W. Dise, and the comprehensive studies of W. Stern, Karl Bühler and others, as well as the investigations of Stanley Hall, Sully, and Tracy which have become generally known through translations. As a result of the investigations of Ernst Meumann, W. Stern, Aloys Fischer and their pupils, the mind of the school child has come to be better understood. The psychology of the adolescent was elaborated much later, as

may be shown by a comparison of the number of titles in the extensive bibliography which Stern furnishes in the first edition of his *Differentiellen Psychologie* (Differential Psychology), 1911. The writings on child psychology, including superior children and differences in school conduct, all put together, number 132; those on adolescents, however, only 11, of which number but two are of German origin. Not till after the Great War did research turn in any greater degree to the psychology of youth.

Like Rousseau, the philosopher Herbart, and Schleiermacher possessed a deep insight into the problems of adolescence; and in the *Erziehungslehre* (Education), 1829, of Fr. H. Chr. Schwartz, who had been influenced by Schelling, there are together with his philosophical speculations numerous pertinent observations which still hold. Yet for a century all these ideas have been carried no further, and even the knowledge of Stanley Hall's great work, *Adolescence,* is confined to a narrow circle. Yet there have been important *social relationships,* as I have pointed out in my *Jugendlichen-Psychologie* (Psychology of Adolescence), which really necessitated a scientific understanding of the adolescent psyche.

The carelessness and increase of criminality on the part of youth which become especially noticeable in time of war and revolution give rise to the question how far on the one hand the spiritual individuality of youth, and on the other economic and social conditions, may be considered as causes of the deterioration of the younger generation. Through the so-called "youth movement," which appeared at the close of the century and had reached its climax before the war, the youth themselves had attracted the attention of

science. The youth movement—this emancipation of the younger from the older generation—could come about only because the youth began to feel that they were no longer understood by their elders, and so there was again the necessity for a more scientific comprehension of adolescent individuality.

The first German studies of the psychology of adolescence seek to give a unified picture of the general nature of young people, based upon the experiences which are to be found in occasional or regular meetings with adolescent boys and girls. Doubtless through these works derived from the observations and experiences of juvenile court judges and neurologists, of teachers and pastors, the knowledge of adolescent mental life was considerably advanced. On the other hand, however, it should not be overlooked that the "bird's-eye view" methods applied here may furnish erroneous results, for their basic observations are biased and many times cannot be checked.

So these subjective proceedings must necessarily be supplemented by another and more rational method. As a hypothesis for an *inductive psychology of adolescence,* there is here offered the plan of making a systematic observation of young people together with a collection and arrangement of the materials obtained in this fashion as well as a collection and interpretation of their spontaneous writings. Charlotte Bühler has followed this road; for at the same time that this investigation was being prepared, she was using the diaries of young people as source material in her suggestive book, *Das Seelenleben des Jugendlichen* (The Mental Life of the Adolescent), Jena, 1922. The number of diaries which stood at the disposal of Frau Bühler has mounted from three in the first edition to

fifty-two in the fourth (Jena, 1927). Several diaries of boys and girls are being published which present valuable material for further research. In an essay, *Tagebücher von Jugendlichen als Quellen zur Psychologie der Reifezeit* (The Diaries of Youth as a Source for the Psychology of Adolescence), I have offered a contribution to the methodical elaboration of this and similar literary productions placed at my disposal in their original form. Thus I have alluded to the boundaries which the diary methods have established. William Stern also in his book *Anfänge der Reifezeit* (Beginnings of Adolescence), in which in a masterly fashion he has analyzed a boy's diary, emphasizes the fact that the significance and genuineness of adolescent notes can be evaluated only in relation with other data obtained from the same writer.

The caution which maintains in Germany in the use of the general inquiry method, and which is also to be found in the earlier part of the present study, is slowly beginning to give way to another attitude. It is realized that by a careful procedure, suited to the nature of a young person, he can be made to give an informative account of himself. In expounding the method, W. Weigel, in his book *Vom Wertereich der Jugendlichen* (From the Value of Youth) has shown more clearly than any one else that the obstacles in the path to the inner life of youth can by these methods be lessened or removed. Weigel's adolescent self-testimonies show how successful he has been in inducing boys and girls to observe their emotional life and to furnish a truthful disclosure of their experiences.

The general questioning can be undertaken orally or in written form. An oral inquiry was made by Th. Voss, in his *Entwicklung von religiösen Vorstel-*

lungen bei Volksschulkindern im alter von 5 bis 14 Jahren (The Development of Religious Ideas in Volksschule Children from Five to Fourteen Years of Age). Voss kept a stenographic account of the statements of children concerning religious concepts, such as devil, angel, God, Jesus, Savior, and Holy Ghost. He found that "none of the children's religious ideas were particularly spiritual in nature, but that they mixed concrete sensory ideas with spiritual or transitional forms"—a conclusion which agrees with our own observations on the religion of the child. Voss rightly points to the dangers which threaten the religious development of the child when this conflict between the sensory elements of his belief world and his regular life experiences is discovered. In this he is supported by Günther Dehn in *Die religiöse Gedankenwelt der Proletarierjugend* (The Religious Thought World of the Proletarian Youth). Following the example of Masselons, Dehn gave the pupils in the Berlin Berufsschulen, who were recruited from the unskilled laborers and trade apprentices, three keywords (for example, God, help, death; God, devotion, nature), and asked them to write compositions about them. On the basis of data obtained in this way, augmented by the oral questioning of about thirty-six hundred boys and girls, Dehn reached this conclusion:

"The picture that youth offers us is that of religious decay. Though this may not be true in every respect of the girls, it is of the boys. Not even the constant stream of youth who are interested in religion and who defend the church and faith in God can deceive us. The dissolution is a fact. It is shown clearly by the lack of religious development at every age level;

it is shown by the decay itself, penetrating everywhere; it is shown finally by the nature of the religious possession which, even when present, is pitifully inadequate."

The Berlin youths whom Dehn studied did not differ essentially in their relation to the surrender of religion from those in the large cities of Germany containing a preponderantly Protestant population. Most of them have received at least six years of religious instruction in school besides about a year of parochial teaching in connection with their confirmation. When the results of religious instruction are so very scanty, there is reason to suppose that they have grown up in an environment in which all religious life is benumbed. For the deciding factor in the growth of religion in the individual's development is always his cultural environment.

The religious thoughts of young people are never based exclusively on their own unfolding life; they always comprehend the form through its objective aspects. The individual, as a being in the process of becoming, can form concepts only in relation to the whole situation, past and present. It is the task of psychology as one of the cultural sciences to have these data established and presented without prejudice.

Eduard Spranger, the leading exponent of this cultural psychology, in his *Psychologie des Jugendalters* (Psychology of Youth) takes the position that all sensory experiences are to be viewed as religious which to the subject disclose all that is highest in his relation to the world. This concept of religion, which he elaborates, is much broader than the one used in this study. In general, however, there is considerable agreement in regard to the religion of the child and

the youth, and the manner in which it develops. Charlotte Bühler's idea likewise coincides in all essential particulars with the one here employed. The results of an unpublished investigation mentioned by Frau Bühler [1] on the religious development of adolescents based on their diaries, by F. Frisch and H. Helzer, also seem to confirm the main results of our own thesis.

Even if I cannot justify the definition of religion given by Spranger, preferring as I do to designate as *Weltanschauung* what for him is religion, I still admit that there is much in common in the two forms of experience. The normal child who grows up in the bosom of his family feels himself, mentally, bound closely to them; he does not reflect, and so he is not yet fully conscious of his individuality. First, as a youth he discovers that he is an ego, that is, something quite by himself; and when he makes this discovery and reflects upon it, he has irrevocably lost the firm hold which as a child he possessed on his natural life circle. His whole youth, from then on, is filled with striving to gain a new hold so as not to be swallowed up in the stream of life. So long as the youth knows he is without a hold, he is ruled by strong feelings of aversion, and his inner insecurity also expresses itself in his outward demeanor. The more the opposition present in the world between the *Should* and the *Is* becomes known to the youth, the more he suffers under life's disharmonies, and there awakes in him the *longing for a First, a Highest, an Absolute, on which he can lean in all life's ups and downs, and to which he can hold fast.*

The child in his need flies to father and mother and

[1] Jena, 1927, p. 183.

finds in them comfort and support. But in the adolescent years the boy and the girl lose touch with their parents. After this, if the young person continues in a friendly relationship with father and mother and teachers, he yet knows that they cannot all his life be his protection and support. Many a young person seeks in some friend the support and fulfillment for his own ego, of whose incompleteness he becomes more and more clearly conscious with increasing maturity. Still only too often he is disappointed in friends whom he seldom sees as they really are, but rather as he would wish them to be, and as they should be according to his notion. Those of a deeper nature feel lonely and thrown back upon themselves. And the mentally active then seek to *better understand the world and thus give a firm hold to their own lives.*

According to his disposition and environment the experiences of the youth are either of a more religious or a more worldly sort. Of the worldly development of those who would not be called pious in the church sense we know very little at the present time; and a thoroughgoing investigation should be undertaken in this direction. Especially should the researches in adolescent psychology turn chiefly to such special investigations. The works cited have accomplished their first task in drawing *a general picture* of the adolescent. Now, therefore, it is a question of following up the individual traits with greater care in order that upon a background of such experiences and knowledge the complete picture may stand out more and more sharply. *The method of special research* will have to adjust itself to the particular kind of traits to be studied. The investigations by E. R. Jaensch and O. Kroh on the ability of adolescents, which have

sought to produce the pictures with hallucinatory clarity, have demonstrated what valuable conclusions on the "substructure" of adolescent mental life are still to be awaited from experiment. For the "superstructure" of mental life—for the historical and cultural influences on mental phenomena—experimentation comes less into the question; research here, as is frequently the case, must resort more to the methods of the cultural sciences.

Our investigation of the religious development of adolescents, based upon their literary productions in view of the proportionately meager data, is, to say the least, a daring attempt. By drawing upon autobiographies and finally upon a questionnaire, the course originally entered upon was partly abandoned. Still, the investigation may have proved that this road is traversable. I am convinced that research in the application of a method is more worth while than the mere theoretical construction of the method if its practical proving has to wait.

THE AUTHOR.

Leipzig, Schönefel.
Nov. 28, 1927.

THE RELIGIOUS DEVELOPMENT OF ADOLESCENTS

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CHAPTER I

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF RELIGION

ALTHOUGH the religious development of youth is the subject here treated, the investigation may be regarded primarily as a contribution to the psychology of adolescence. This term probably needs no special definition. We understand an adolescent to be a growing young person of from fourteen to twenty-one years of age—that period during which a normal individual is ceasing to be a child and is maturing into a man or woman.

Since we are here concerned with various problems in the psychology of religion, we must first ask ourselves what we mean by the term religion. At the outset we admit that it is impossible to give a satisfactory definition. At the psychological congress at Geneva, Leuba endeavored to present a survey of all the varying definitions of religion; but even such detail cannot really be called comprehensive or exhaustive; religion will always be defined in as many different ways as there are attitudes toward it.

If, however, we try to be as impersonal as possible in our judgments, it seems psychologically impossible to approach the religious life without taking some position. For the purposes of the present investigation,

therefore, we need do no more than set forth the essence of religion as it is herein understood.

Religion, by its very nature, is the experiencing of a reality—of a being—which, in contrast with the reality perceived by the senses—the natural being—comes to be known as something "entirely different." [1] This "entirely different" something at the same time is recognized as a thing "mightily effective" by which the natural being is ordained. And finally this "entirely different" something is experienced as the "highest good" to which all other goods are incomparably inferior. This highest power and highest good, which comes to be known as something "entirely different," is God.

Some neuter word might better be used, because to the expression "God" there clings an anthropomorphic element not found unqualified on the higher levels of religious experience. Although Scheler [2] writes that "we may speak of religion only when its object bears divine, personal form," the term "personal form" does not appear to us applicable in every case. God can be experienced as completely formless; and an extremely high level of religion is recognized by Ekkehart [3] who thinks that a complete unity of God and man cannot exist so long as there is a place in the depths of the soul for any image at all! The mystics speak of the "soul depths" in which God is experienced. This expression contains the important psychological suggestion that we are concerned in religion with a process—a mental attitude—which presents considerable difficulty to the understanding.

When religion is understood as "the feeling of

[1] Otto, p. 28, writes of the "Ganzandere."
[2] Scheler, p. 535.
[3] Ekkehart, p. 79.

direct dependence," then it is to be noted that religion is not merely feeling. And since Schleiermacher has somewhere defined religion as the "contemplation and feeling of the universe," we may further object in that with the thinking and feeling an element of the will is indissolubly blended. Religious attitude is a complex mental structure which resists reduction into its constituent parts. If, however, an analysis is attempted, it is always at the expense of the real meaning of religion; or, as is more often the case, the analysis exhausts itself with the secondary elements of the spiritual life.

Careful consideration discovers the religious experience, as it were, in three strata: the inmost stratum or the real core is the imageless, formless experience of God. As the second stratum there appears the embodiment of this experience, the beholding of God in a definite rôle or form, for example, as Lord or as Father. Finally, the third or outer stratum is the picturing of God as some one or some thing that has actually been seen.

Never can the spoken word or religious judgment reveal adequately the inner core. Those attributes seem most meaningful which remain negative in form and describe God as inscrutable, infinite, ineffable, supernatural, and supra-mundane. The religious man will perceive these attributes of God not as negative but, because of his own inner life experience, as positive, referring as they do to a more exalted condition than their opposites. On the other hand, it may be said that the unreligious man or the person not yet ripened for religious experience by such external means as articles of faith will not attain to any real conception of God if he does not already possess a

bent or readiness for it. It is a true saying that if you do not feel it, you will not acquire it. To cite an analogy: one will not attain musical feeling and understanding by listening to the most finished production if he does not already possess in himself a talent for music. Just so, the knowledge of God has by no means meant the experiencing of God, even though the latter may be aroused or awakened by the former.

Religion cannot be analyzed into the associated mental elements of feeling, perception, thought, and will as if into closed and independent compartments. Even less can it be traced back genetically from the more elemental conscious states characterized by strong affective elements—such as "timidity, shyness, anxiety, fear, worry, hope, a feeling of weakness and insufficiency, or astonishment and wonder." [4] Even fear and astonishment can never be transformed into religion. These are merely occasions or stimuli through whose agency the previously latent religious consciousness is released. Those who investigate the religious development of man can, therefore, never consider it their task to explain religious experience by attempting to derive it from simpler mental images and associations.

Here we can do little more than sketch the religious attitudes in their connection with other mental processes and define and describe some of the peculiarities of each. In so doing, the stimuli giving rise to the religious life and the influences promoting and limiting it, as the individual experiences them in his environment, must be established; and their significance must be evaluated in order that their tendency and inner structure may be distinguished all the more clearly.

[4] Jahn, pp. 136, 138.

Thus, somewhere along the road of careful analysis and comparison of the given phenomena we hope to arrive at an understanding of the religious development of adolescence.

Like other American investigators who belong to the waning Stanley Hall school of psychology, E. D. Starbuck, in his investigation of the religious psychology of adolescence, employed the statistical method. Starbuck is well aware of its weaknesses and disadvantages. He even cites special difficulties with which one has to reckon as follows:[5] Most persons have little power of introspection, and their memory of past events is imperfect. At best, the descriptions of subjective events are poor accounts of what has happened. Finally, in the questionnaire method the personal equation of the investigator is certain to enter into the results.

It cannot be said that Starbuck completely overcame the difficulties mentioned. At the outset, so far as the answers which he receives from his questionnaires are concerned, there is no possibility of testing their dependability; and though Starbuck places full confidence in the statements, that is no proof that they are objectively true, even assuming that his subjects possessed the desire to give true reports and were free from the common weaknesses of vanity and the desire to be interesting. Whoever is not trained in the technique of introspection will never be able to furnish scientifically useful material for the investigation of mental processes so intimate as those of the religious life. Naturally, introspection of religious experiences is, in the main, defeated by the limitations of introspection as a method. At the moment when a religious

[5] Starbuck, p. 12.

experience is being observed, it loses its originality and is changed and modified by consciously attending to it. A religious experience can be fully perceived only when it has passed, is contemplated from memory, and is, as it were, reconstructed. Starbuck did not sufficiently allow for the usual incapacity for such retrospection or the remodeling and omissions of past events, which are due to the fundamental nature of the memory processes.

As to the manner of expression of those who answer the questionnaires, W. Stahlin [6] has properly pointed out that, given the spiritual forms of a religious organization, the subject almost always assumes a stereotyped religious manner of thought and expression; Starbuck [7] himself refers to the common forms of expression in cases of conversion. This condition all but excludes an unprejudiced description of the nature of one's own earlier inner life.

Every questionnaire, be it ever so skillfully drawn up, exercises a suggestive effect on the reader, even though it is due to no more than the focusing of the attention with particular force on the matters with which it deals. The best thing that can be said for questionnaires will always be that at least the answers are objective. But the inner experience, the essence of the mental process, the scientific investigation of which is of main importance, is slighted. Let it not be said that the mass of observations and the conclusions drawn from voluminous material can compensate for the defects of single answers. Agreement of answers reveals, as Binet once remarked, at times only the influence of a constant error.

[6] *Archiv. f. Ges. Psychol.*, XVIII, p. 5.
[7] Starbuck, p. 368.

The experimental method may be even less well adapted than the questionnaire to the investigation of religious development for, as Stern and Krüger pointed out, an experimental situation may have an influence upon the natural course of that development. What I. Schröteler,[8] and other authors quoted by him feared in studying the religious life of the child is quite as applicable to the adolescent; namely, that a certain freshness and originality would necessarily be sacrificed. Furthermore, one cannot avoid the consideration that the pumping method of inquiry has ethical limitations, and that it is overstepping the authority of the school if it compels young people either to expose their most personal inner thoughts or else to deceive the teacher. But if the questioner (it need not always be the teacher) abandons the attempt to press into the inner core of religious experience and contents himself with external secondary phenomena, which will usually be the case, the scientific value of the investigation is correspondingly lessened.

In contrast with the questioning methods, the collection and interpretation of spontaneous expression is probably more dependable, even if it does not at first give that impression of scientific exactness, which is so engaging in the statistical method. The source material for the compilation method grows partly out of observations of parents, teachers, and pastors; so only a reasonably modest disclosure of the religious attitude of youth can be gained through this particular kind of observation. The reason for this lies in the fact that a youth cannot be observed apart from his social environment as can a baby; furthermore, the youth in religious matters is very shy in the presence

[8] Schröteler, p. 72.

of older people, especially when he no longer agrees with their religious opinions.

A great deal of material derived from introspection is scattered through autobiographies and autobiographical romances. In the psychological evaluation of these sources, the time factor is always to be taken into account: the greater the distance in time of the narrator from the incidents described, the more incompletely they are reconstructed, for later attitudes toward the world and life will tend to give a new interpretation to earlier experiences. Thus, for example, one can trace Feuerbach's influence on Keller in *Grünen Heinrich* in the description of the latter's childish faith. Attempts to justify his attitude or to consider the whole life from the viewpoint of the kindly guidance of God, which are made by the writer of the autobiography, warn us to employ caution in working with these sources.

After the autobiographical material, in which the time factor is always to be especially considered, come the spontaneous utterances of children and adolescents, which as a rule exhibit a much higher degree of originality. We possess excellent original material concerning young people in the form of letters, diaries, and poems. Obviously the value of these "sources of the first rank" will be the greater, the more coherent the single utterances are in themselves; the ideal case is that in which we can group together all possible utterances of an individual's religious life. Several such individual developments placed side by side and compared with each other will put us in a position to work out on the one hand the general character of religious development, and on the other the variability in the possible types.

But before the discovery of existing similarities and the formation of types, the material must be sifted and interpreted. In the autobiographies, religious experiences of adolescence are often already interpreted and arranged sometimes even by the subject himself, which is generally to be considered dependable. This interpretation and arrangement of religious experiences, however, is often determined, as has already been suggested, by the later attitude of the autobiographer toward the world. And in the diaries, letters, and poems of youth, religious experience is not restricted to its primary, immediate form. The written report itself means an interpretation and arrangement of original religious experiences. Still in many ways the youth who is reporting his experience is under its immediate influence. If it is represented and in a certain way rationalized at the time of transcribing, this does not mean that the writer's attitude may not change one way and another as time goes on. Though the material contained in the literary products of adolescence has the advantage of greater originality and honesty, its collection, winnowing, and interpretation, on the other hand, present greater difficulties than does preparing the matter preserved in the autobiographies.

The present investigation depends mainly on the psychological study of such material as is contained in the diaries, letters, and poems of adolescents. A glance at the extant literature of the field shows that relatively little of such material has been published or worked over. The literary productions mentioned in the following pages were placed at my disposal in manuscript form by friends. Some of the authors are well known to me personally; and in the case of the

literary productions of the others, there is no basis for doubting their honesty. The manuscript material is composed of the following items:

1. Diary notes of a religious nature by A (girl pupil in an institution of learning, later a student), 12-23 yrs. of age, p. 46ff.
2. Diary (complete) and poems by B (pupil in a seminary for teachers, later a teacher), 15-23 yrs. of age, pp. 49ff., 115f.
3. Diary notes of a religious nature by C (first attending a seminary, later a student of philosophy), p. 116ff.
4. Diary (complete) of D (first seminary student, later a teacher), 18-21 yrs., p. 118f.
5. Religious confessions of E (20 yr.-old officer), pp. 60, 119f.
6. Poems of F (first attending a seminary, later a student of philosophy), 18-20 yrs., p. 120f.
7. Religious confessions of G (merchant), 21 yrs.
8. Religious confessions of H (candidate for degree in philosophy; earlier, gymnasium student), 27 yrs. old.
9. Letter of religious nature by J (merchants' apprentice), 16 years old, p. 86f.
10. Poems of K (gymnasium student), 18-20 yrs. old, pp. 97ff., 121.
11. Poems of L (a seminary student), 17-19 yrs. old, p. 122.
12. Diary notes of M (gymnasium student), 18 yrs. old, p. 122f.
13. Poems of N (gymnasium student), 16-18 yrs. old. Autobiography of N, 18 yrs. old, p. 123ff.
14. Poems of O (gymnasium student), 17-18 yrs. old, p. 125f.
15. Diary (complete) of P (a seminary student, now M.D.), 16-17 yrs. old, p. 128f.
16. Diary (complete) of Q (pupil in a higher school for girls, later educator and teacher), 14-29 yrs. old, p. 129f.

The literary productions cited are, of course, of unequal value in furnishing a knowledge of the religious development of adolescence. The religious confessions (of E, G, and H) in their originality and honesty, resemble the testimonies contained in autobiographies. In the youthful verses religious experience is frequently less apparent than the aesthetic, and the poems are often more significant for the latter than for the former. The religious peculiarity of adolescents appears most directly in their diaries. The youth who in distinction from the child, is becoming conscious of his peculiar, unique being, and likewise feels himself much alone, seeks to conquer this loneliness by a close companionship with a "thou." Among adults he finds no proper understanding of his needs; the friend whom the youth seeks often disappoints him; therefore he creates for himself in his diary a sort of "thou-substitute"! In the diary the writer expresses himself unreservedly and honestly—at least he usually entertains the desire to do so. The fact that many a youth has employed a secret code shows how much trouble he has taken to keep the diary exclusively for himself.

Besides those who feel lonesome, who, as in the case of the diary of a young girl published by Charlotte Bühler, "absolutely cannot help keeping a diary," there are young authors who keep one entirely from force of habit, sometimes pedantically, solely for the purpose of rescuing daily events from oblivion. Diary keepers of this sort usually care nothing about keeping their notes secret; on the contrary they are often inclined to share them with other persons. The handwritten diaries serving as a basis for the present investigation, like the one published by Charlotte Bühler, belong to the first mentioned type. The authors

wanted to write only for themselves, not for others; and they wanted to record their reactions to everything which strongly affected their inner feelings and which they could not express in any other way that satisfied them.

The present treatment does not rest upon comprehensive material which characterizes all adolescents alike. Those youths who put their experience into writing represent an entirely definite type generally distinguished by theoretical, contemplative interests, a type which we may designate as "literary" in contrast with those of a more practical turn of mind. Whether the religious development of both types runs the same course will have to be shown by future investigations. Further, the young people whose religion we are here reporting belong to a certain social status; with the exception of E, G, and J, they are students in higher institutions of learning, and all profess Protestantism. Thus the present circumscribed study must be considered as representing merely a first attempt, which must, however, be ventured. Although a collection of further materials is being made, perhaps the present treatment, if it is published, may on its part contribute to enrich the collection of matter and become the occasion for further investigations, that from the observation of the religious development of these adolescents the religious development of adolescence may stand out more clearly. In this presentation we wish to be mindful of the fact that a monograph implies an artificial abstracting and emphasis of a part of a whole; the danger of forgetting the whole for a part we shall try to avoid by always considering the religious development of adolescence in its dependence upon the whole mental development.

If we earlier cast any aspersions upon the statistical method, we did not mean that it was to be denied any value at all, but only that the biographical method must first show the probable course of the development; the comparative biographical method must emphasize the inner differences within the single types of development. Then the statistical method can undertake the testing of the results which have come from the biographical inquiry. In accordance with this principle, the individual's development has always been chosen as the starting point in this investigation. But first of all for the testing and confirmation of the results, the suggestive material which is to be found in Starbuck's *Psychology of Religion* is drawn upon; further, statistical findings as presented by Stanley Hall, Weigl, Lobsein, and Lau are used in similar manner. Finally, the results are also cited of an inquiry among fifteen- and sixteen-year-old girls in a higher school in Leipzig, which was prepared as an appendix, the value of which, meager though its results are, I find to lie in the fact that it shows a cross section of the development of a certain age and in a certain environment—the large city.

CHAPTER II

THE RELIGION OF THE CHILD

In order that the religion of the adolescent may be more clearly characterized, we shall compare it with the religion of the child. When we speak of the religion of the child, we mean only a preliminary stage; for our observations will teach us that we may not as a rule speak of a child's religion in the sense indicated in the introduction; rather we are dealing with a first step only, of what we, borrowing from Scholz, will call "religion in its fullest sense." Religion is not inborn in the child, as the nativists maintain; nor is it acquired from his environment, as the empiricists think. The religious nature of a child will unfold only if the environment does not prevent this unfolding; and religious influence alone will not make a child religious, if he is not disposed to it from the start. Heredity and environment must work together, "converge," if religion is to develop in a human being. If we observe that the child's world of religious ideas takes a certain stamp from the community environment, and further, that the child accepts the religious ideas and dogmas of his environment, this does not prove that conjointly with it an inner adaptation or comprehension must necessarily arise through the central personality—a real "experience with God."

However, the most favorable conditions for the development of the religious disposition in young per-

sons we may assume to be present when a child is descended from religious parents and grows up in a strictly religious environment. If a child is to have any religion at all this religion must be able to develop where father's and forefathers' influence is strongly felt.

Karl Philipp Moritz grew up, as he tells us in his autobiographical novel, *Anton Reiser,* under just such favorable conditions. If we take the religion of the boy, Karl Moritz, as a significant case of childish religion and really seek to understand it, we may also expect to establish certain general characteristics of the religion of the child. Moritz tells how the little Anton Reiser grew up in pietistic circles and was early acquainted by his father with the teachings and views of French Quietists. At nine the boy was reading a book that treated of an "early fear of God," which so "strongly affected his whole soul that he formed a firmer resolve to be converted than most adults do." At this time the boy literally obeyed everything that he read in the book about "prayer, obedience, patience, regulation, and almost considered every unnecessarily quick step a sin." With his parents he sang Madam Guyon's songs (in their German translation) and learned them by heart. They possessed so much that was "soul-ravishing," "such an inimitable tenderness, such a gentle twilight in their recital," that they exerted an indelible influence on Anton's heart.[1] The frail and neglected boy consoles himself in his forlorn condition with a "song of soul-outpouring and of sweet annihilation before the Source of Being."

The father puts into the boy's hand a book by Madam Guyon—directions for inner prayer. Now

[1] Moritz, p. 30.

the boy sits for hours with closed eyes, just as his father did, in order to perceive God's voice in his heart. Partly compelled, partly voluntarily, the child imitates the religious manner of his environment; does he adopt the religious content in all its depth and subjectivity? Anton soon reaches a confidential intercourse with God; and the nature and manner of this intercourse is significant for the child's religion. The boy speaks with God "as we speak with our equals," but he would become quite petulant with Him "when a toy was broken or a wish frustrated. He would exclaim, "Can't I be granted even this little thing?" The child cannot by his very nature appreciate the incomparable sublimity of Him whom he approaches in prayer.

Another sign of childhood piety which we observe again and again appears at the same time—self-seeking. The child in his weakness must be a little egoist if he wishes to achieve in the world; and thus the child's religion is thoroughly ego-centric. To him prayers are only a means by which he tries to procure for himself relief or pleasure. Little Anton learned from his books that all childlike desire and happiness, all jumping and playing are sinful. Yet he was not able entirely to suppress all his genuine impulses for movement and play. By chance he finds a wheelbarrow, and takes the greatest delight in pushing it about the garden. The consciousness of his sin awakes, and Anton tries to appease it. And again, the way he does this is delightfully childlike. In Madam Guyon's writings he has read much of the little Jesus, "that He was everywhere and one could go about with Him constantly in all places." The diminutive causes Anton to represent the little Jesus to himself

as a little boy. As he has confiding intercourse with God, the Father, just so he establishes a similar confiding relationship with the Son. He plays with Him as with an equal, puts Him into the wheelbarrow and with touching diligence pushes Him about in the garden until exhausted. "Thus finally he came to look on this as a sort of service to God and no longer considered it a sin" [2] to push the wheelbarrow with the boy Jesus a half day at a time. The outstanding characteristic of the child's religion is to be found in this incident: he represents to himself objects of his faith clearly and anthropomorphically; God the Father, Jesus, and the angels are people of the sort we are accustomed to know in daily life.

A new world opens up to Anton Reiser when he becomes acquainted with the Græco-Roman theology; "with keenest appetite and with true rapture" he reads the stories of Troy, the voyages of Ulysses, and Fenelon's *Telemach.* Since he was not expressly told what was poetry in it, he is soon inclined "to accept as true the stories of the heathen gods with everything that went with them." [3] And here is another significant thing about the child's religion. As a rule, without criticism and without doubt, he accepts all the religious conceptions which are provided him by his environment.

The foundation for this credulity had been laid early in Anton Reiser. From his second and third years he recalled the torments of hell he has suffered from the tales of ghosts and devils told him by his mother and aunts. This horror fostered in the child was further strengthened by the fear of thunder

[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 33-34.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 35.

storms. "His only refuge at such times was to fold his hands as quickly as he could and not to unfold them until the storm was over." And Anton imagined death as a ghost. His mother's expression that "death sat on a dying person's tongue" was taken literally by the boy; and once when a relative died, he looked into his mouth, to discover death on his tongue, perhaps like a small black person.[4]

One can always observe in the child's religion the distinguishing characteristics of the figurative, mythological element, which we notice even in young Reiser's world of faith drawn as it is from sensory impressions. Gottfried Keller in *Grünen Heinrich* tells how in earlier childhood he had thought of God as a golden weathercock glistening in the evening sunlight, later in the form of a tiger which he had seen in a picture book. Friedrich Hebbel and Otto Ernst report that to them God was originally identical with their father. As a rule, God is represented as a friendly old man. "The dear God is good. I could just squeeze him," said a three-(?)year-old girl. Love and omnipotence are the essential characterictics which distinguish God. Six- and seven-year-old children mostly have concrete ideas of His appearance. "God has a long white beard"—probably borrowed from the idea of Santa Claus—"He has a blue cloak," "He is tall—reaches from the sky to the earth." Like God the Father, Jesus the Christ child is thought of as clothed in white. Angels, Santa Claus, and Knecht Rupprecht are other celestial forms. As a rule, the child leans toward polytheism. Heaver is thought of as a castle or a gorgeous city. An eleven-year-old girl reports, "In Heaven everything is gold and silver." "The dear

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 43.

God looks around out of his golden window, and that is what the sun is," thinks a six-year-old girl.

By the child Heaven is not looked on as beyond, something "entirely different," but only as a continuation, as a part, of the natural world. Death means only a change in one's place of sojourn. Our five-year-old Gudrun is still waiting, after months, for the return of his little brother who died. Once the child exclaimed: "I want to go to Heaven, too. There I'll take Ottfried's hand and run away from Heaven with him." The child cannot conceive of God as the highest power any more than he can a beyond. In a thunderstorm, Gudrun suddenly begins to pray: "Oh! dear God, please make it stop thundering, or something awful may happen." Then after it had lightened once, the thunder stopped. The child ascribed the cessation of the storm to the prayer and he then said: "Perhaps the dear God Himself was scared," when it lightened again after the prayer.

At times many children's ideas of God are so vivid that they even think they see Him. Schreiber reports of a somewhat feeble-minded girl, that she confounded the pastor in the church with God. A beginner in school says: "I saw God when we lived in V. He shined into a room at our house." Obviously the little one considered the moon was God, a confusion which was also observed by Schreiber. Lay tells of his son, that at six he prayed to the moon. Our five-year-old Marian said to her weeping sister: "The moon hears it, he will tell the Christ-child, and He will tell the dear God." From similar expressions Stanley Hall assumes the revival of the race's primitive naturalistic forms of religion in the individual, "the rudiments and buds of every one of all the ancient religions are found

in the child's soul." We renounce such speculations and see in the above-mentioned sayings of children only the expressions of a real myth-forming fancy, which is surely in many respects like the fancy of man in a state of nature. To try to explain the beginnings of a child's religion by the primitive religion of mankind on a biogenetic basis, as Stanley Hall, Starbuck, and other American psychologists have tried to do, is trying to substitute an x for a y, to explain an unknown something by another unknown.

The observations quoted thus far have to do with children up to nine years of age. The remarks of eleven- and twelve-year-old boys quoted by Schreiber show that the religious ideas of these age levels are also full of images. The greater experience and the further perception of older children appear in the fact that they paint God's form still more clearly and sharply: "He is the oldest man in the world"; "His brow and cheeks have wrinkles, the hair of His beard has long ago turned white"; "He makes lights to shine upon the earth and when it rains He is sprinkling with his watering pots." Life in heaven is depicted in detail often bearing the closest similarity to life as it is related in tales of Schlaraffenland. It is worthy of notice that at this level there is a clear consciousness that one cannot really see God. Christ's words, "God is a spirit," are quoted as proof of this; however, God continues to be represented as visible.

The ideas of God held by thirteen- and fourteen-year-old boys were also anthropomorphic—boys who had had religious instruction in school-confirmation lessons. "What they have to say of heaven and hell shows them to have great naïvité, on a level of development which is not clearly distinguishable from that of

the class just below." With these words Schreiber [5] condenses his judgment of the last age level of the public school.

The thoroughly anthropomorphic character of children's ideas of God is established by the statistical findings which J. Weigl collected from a large number of Catholic school children. To the question: "How have you imagined the dear God?" [6] 720 answers were handed in; of them 139 (19.3%) said, old man; 116 (16.11%) ordinary man; 62 (8.16%) with splendid clothes; 58 (8.06%) Christ-child; 24 (3.33%) rich man. Other answers were similar: a king; like my father; a priest; an angel. Only a few children had thought of God as unlike man; 3 as an eye in the triangle, 2 as heaven, 2 as a dove.

As for younger, so for older children, there is no noteworthy difference between God and man, here or beyond. Eight-year-olds consider it possible to go to heaven in an airship; but thirteen- and fourteen-year-old boys, as Schreiber [5] reports, imagined "heaven on a high mountain" or "behind the clouds." Death means no complete turning away from this world; there are degrees of being dead. When our seven-year-old Marian heard of a cremation, she said: "When I am dead, I want to be buried; then one is merely impossible (unmöglich); but when one is burned up, one is quite dead." On the basis of similar observations, Hug-Hellmuth remarks: "To the child, being dead means a condition of sleeping, from which one can easily be awakened, or of being in a far-away place which one can leave at will." [7]

The child, filled with confidence in his expanding

[5] Schreiber, p. 57.
[6] Weigl, p. 12.
[7] *Imago* I (1912), p. 287; cf. *Imago* III (1914), p. 94 (by Th. Reik).

environment, accepts its religious teaching just as credulously and uncritically as he appropriates any other possession of culture. Henseling reports on the basis of his experiences that children believe in miracles up to the third year in school. Probably, however, a belief in miracles lasts till the end of the school period; and Henseling is right when he says that doubt, when it appears in the child, has usually been imposed from without. When Schreiber describes his fourteen-year-old schoolboys as having doubts in respect to the nature of heaven and hell, we are probably dealing with independent impulses of reason, whose awakening and strengthening is characteristic of the mind of the adolescent.

The credulity of the child is shown not only in faith in miracles but also in the uncritical acceptance of all possible superstitious notions. Miracles and charms are jumbled about in the child's mind; in neither does he see anything impossible or unnatural. In general, I could establish the existence of superstitions in greater number in nine-year-old children. Younger children possess only a small number of superstitious notions, but girls in the last classes of the Volkschule are especially inclined to superstition. How numerous and widespread are superstitious notions at the present time, even among children of large cities, is demonstrated by the expressions of children quoted by me in *Mitteilungen des Vereins fur Sachsische Volkskunde.*[8] I have the impression that adults can be only partly held to account for the handing down and diffusion of child superstitions. As children's games are passed on for centuries from child to child, just so the children themselves seem to pass on ancient superstitions. And

[8] Bd. VII.

to the question of the origin of certain superstitious notions, usually the answer would be: "The children say so," or "He (or she) told me."

The credulous acceptance of religious tradition, from whatever direction it spreads, is the normal thing; only very seldom do younger children raise doubts. A familiar, oft-quoted example of it is that of six-year-old Goethe. As he tells it in *Dichtung und Wahrheit,* the news of the Lisbon earthquake greatly affected the boy: "God, the creator and preserver of heaven and earth, whom the explanation of the first article of the creed has represented to him as so wise and merciful, had not shown Himself in any degree fatherly, in that He abandoned the just and the unjust to the same ruin. In vain the young mind tried to strengthen itself against these impressions, which was on the whole all the more impossible because the wise ones and those versed in the scriptures could not agree on how such a phenomenon was to be regarded."

Ellen Key reports of her childhood: "I remember my hatred toward God when I heard at six years of the death of Jesus as caused by God's demands for atonement, and my denial at ten of God's providence, when a young laborer died leaving five children who needed him greatly." It seems to be socio-ethical considerations, which lead to the earliest religious doubts. Doubts of a purely intellectual sort, as cited by Schreiber ("that there are angels above I do not believe, for where there is not air they could not live") clearly point to succeeding stages of development.

Finally there arise doubts, though of limited vitality, from the unfulfilled wishes and prayers of children. An example of this is afforded by the life story of the iron-wright, Bareiss, in Levinstein's *Proletariers*

Jugendjahre. The dear grandmother of the boy thirteen years old dies in spite of all his fervent prayers. "The next night was the first time he doubted God's justice and reproached Him in prayer," and when the preacher is reading the burial service, the boy thinks: "Surely this time the dear God made a mistake; or did He hear my nightly prayers at all?" H. A. Krüger tells likewise in the Moravian juvenile story, *Gottfried Kämpfer,* how his grandmother's death aroused most serious doubts about God and the world in his passionate boy mind. In the unfulfillment of lesser wishes and prayers a sullen child may break with God after the manner of little Anton Reiser. Indeed, similar dissatisfactions often come to the praying child. In this he is like man in a state of nature; for as with the primitive man, so with the child, as far as he prays in his own words and does not mechanically repeat learned sentences, the prayer has to do with the personal welfare of the one praying. Gottfried Keller in *Grünen Heinrich* in an unsurpassable manner described the contents of such child prayers. Every one who associates with children can supply like examples. The child feels himself as it were the center of the religious world, about which everything revolves. In *Glauben und Wissen,* a story of real inner development, August Messer writes in this vein: "Thus it was in reality my own well-being that I sought in religion. The most powerful motive which drew me to God was concern for my early welfare and my soul's salvation." [9]

If one conceives religion as the experience of God, as an "entirely different" and "higher" reality,[10] one

[9] Messer, p. 2.
[10] *Cf.* p. 5.

may not impute to many children religion (in its fullest sense!). Events by which a child is stirred to his very depths and is made conscious of his own weakness and the rule of a higher power are to be looked upon as exceptions. Even though such cases are reported in autobiographies, they are no proof to the contrary. In such autobiographies, it is generally a case of people who tower above the average. As there are youthful artists, why should there not be a religious child? On the other hand there is a possibility—and no autobiographer should be charmed against this danger—that he may give a religious interpretation to the experiences of his childhood on the basis of his later life.

Hebbel [11] tells in the story of his life unfortunately uncompleted, how when he was once sitting with other children in the Klippschule and a mighty thunderstorm was raging, the instructors cried out: "God is angry." "These words made a deep impression on me: they forced me to look down on myself and everything around me and kindled the religious spark in me." When the boy reaches home and sees the damage which the storm caused, he suddenly understands why his father always goes to church on Sunday: "I had become acquainted with the Lord of Lords; His angry servants, thunder and lightning, hail and storm had opened wide to Him the doors of my heart. . . . And what had happened in me was soon apparent; for one evening when the wind was blowing hard down the chimney and the rain was pelting heavily on the roof, while I was being put to bed, the accustomed chatter of my lips suddenly was changed into a genuine prayer, and then the spiritual cord which until then

[11] Hebbel, *Ges. Werke*, VIII.

had bound me inseparably to my parents was cut." In similar manner Goethe also tells of a storm which became his "intimate opportunity" to become acquainted with the "angry God about whom the Old Testament had so much to tell." Natural phenomena such as storms may often awaken in children an almost pre-religious fear; if the child has already heard God spoken of, the fear will be transferred to Him as the cause of the storm; but only in a few, especially gifted older children, primitive fright seems to result in religious fear and awe.

General inquiries and statistical assembling of religious experiences of children will never produce results that are not open to objection. Thus Weigl, among others, asked Catholic school children the question: "From what cause or on what occasion did you first get an understanding of God?" It is entirely out of the question that children will remember such an experience after many years, even granted they have had it, and that it is not suggested to them by the question. If, after religious teaching at home, prayer at home, and church going, storms are discovered to be the fourth cause, there is a certain significance to the fact in so far as it is another indication that striking natural phenomena arouse in the child a feeling of dependence on superior powers to which he would otherwise have remained a stranger. The remark of Weigl, who writes in regard to a storm as cause, deserves notice: "That there is no influence on the part of the persons asking the questions is shown by the fact that the 48 cases are divided fairly proportionately into 25 classes with two to four examples in each."

In recapitulation we present again the following characteristics essential to the "religion of the child."

1. The child accepts trustfully and uncritically the religious ideas of adults; the child's religion is, to use Vorwerk's expression, "a religion of authority, custom, or memory" with as yet no independent and personal idea of God.

2. God is always portrayed as mythological and symbolic; to the child God is always a man endowed with higher and more forceful powers ("Phantasy religion").

3. The child's religion is always of this world; the child is not yet able to grasp God as something "entirely different."

4. The child feels himself as the center of existence; but the experience of God as of the highest incomparable worth simply remains a stranger to him.

The child's religion is therefore not to be designated as religion in the "fullest" sense, as we have used the term. In opposition to Kabisch, Vorwerk, and other theological authors, we are of the opinion that children can be called religious only in the rarest cases. If we deny the "child's religion" any real religious worth, the question of its significance in the religious development of the adolescent and the adult still remains open.

CHAPTER III

THE PROGRESS OF RELIGIOUS DEVELOPMENT

THE religious training of young people has for centuries been carried on by the Moravians, the Pietists, and other sects with closer attention than in other churches. These sects early admonished the youths to take heed that they render a good account of themselves. Even if the reports of these youthful sectarians are to be considered as special cases from the standpoint of the church, we must nevertheless include them in an observation of the course of the religious development of young people; these "special cases," as already mentioned, are more clearly described than those which develop normally. Furthermore, they show certain earmarks which are also characteristic of the "normal" course, and which are delineated with special clarity. And finally certain forms of development, which by these sects are considered the rule, also appear in the church where, however, they are then considered exceptions. We cannot do better than to study the different possible forms (types) found in the course of religious development in connection with the autobiographical novel of K. P. Moritz, who spent the years of his later youth in a religious environment.

When the twelve-year-old Anton Reiser was compelled by his father's command to leave the beloved abode of learning, he was very unhappy as was shown not only in his daily life but in religious matters as

well. "In church, where formerly he had been a pattern of reverence, he chatted all through the service with his fellows. . . . He became a hypocrite toward God, toward others, and toward himself." At times Anton has spells of repentance. But the "life blessed of God," toward which he strove, does not return. He is always compelled to fall back into his sinful habits. "Then he began the process all over again, and thus wavered continuously back and forth and nowhere found rest and satisfaction, in vain growing embittered over the innocent pleasures of his youth." Not until the end of adolescence did Anton recover his mental serenity.

Examples of storm and stress, as Moritz reports them in his autobiographical novel, are to be found elsewhere in the lives of adolescents. The successive stages of religious development with their emotional disturbances and catastrophies are especially favored by those who strive to bring about conversion and to this end deliberately and systematically foster the consciousness of sin and guilt in young persons, as was and still is the case with Pietism and some other sects. So we find this form turning up again and again at different times.

The letters of youthful Friedrich Schleiermacher and his sister Lotte, which they write from Gradenfrei and Niesky to their relatives, tell of a violent struggle toward conversion. In Plesz, the Schleiermacher brother and sister had come under Moravian influence; the teaching of the natural depravity of man and the supernatural works of divine grace, as the Moravian brothers claimed to know they had been experienced, caused a seething ferment in their souls. At this time, seventeen-year-old Lotte writes: "My heart's restless-

ness kept growing more and more. . . . One Sunday, it was September 23 (1872) I fell into deep meditation earnestly considering what could really bring me the peace of mind for which I so deeply longed. Suddenly it seemed to me that these (the brotherhood) were the ones in whose midst one could get sustenance for the immortal soul, and far from outside temptations, approach nearer the great goal; at this thought an indescribably blessed feeling encompassed me." In his autobiography Schleiermacher reports his own restlessness of spirit when with his sister he was received into the Moravian denomination: "In vain I struggled for the supernatural sensations of whose indispensability I was convinced by my every thought gained from my instruction concerning a future day of reckoning; of whose reality I was convinced by every sermon and every song, yes, every sight of these men so winning to one in such a mood. But these sensations seemed to escape me only. Then when I thought I had caught a shadow of them, it showed itself at once as a product of my own fruitless, striving imagination."

But yet, in Gradenfrei, Schleiermacher appears already to have experienced a sort of Pietistic awakening.[1] Let us present one of Lotte's reports as a typical case of the quickly changing emotions in the days of youth; in it she tells [2] how she is "blessed and happy in the Savior" and "can associate with Him as a child with his father"; but a revulsion occurs, "as if a covering were suddenly torn from my eyes. I should think of myself as a lost human child; yet my own righteousness made this difficult. Finally, however, when I was

[1] Meier, p. 61.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 67.

forced to realize, that in spite of my virtuous conduct I was full of sin, I despaired not knowing what to do." Schleiermacher's teachers at Niesky had exerted themselves to indoctrinate their pupils with the thought that "there is no more blessed lot than to associate with Jesus," as he says in a birthday poem of the year 1784. The result of these efforts is told in one of the boy's letters written to his sister when by chance he was enabled to partake of confirmation and the Lord's Supper (March, 1784). And a half year later another letter reports: "The Savior is never faithless, however often we are; but the more tranquil, the better, the more unvaried, the more peaceful and nearer heaven —preferably actually there." Thus the sixteen-year-old is filled with longing for the beyond, although at the same time he is zealously pursuing studies in Greek literature. The calm, orderly life in the school protected Schleiermacher from external conflicts, and thus his development remained a battle with his own nature, until later at Barby the youth's critical understanding triumphed over feeling and led to a break with the religious tradition of the brotherhood.

Even more plainly than in Schleiermacher's religious development dissension and wavering appear in the case of the Swede, Brinkman, who at the same time attended the seminary at Barby. The ninteen-year-old Brinkman writes among other things in his diary, given in abridged form by Meier: "Tormented by lust. Pathetic prayer to the Savior." "I cannot describe how horrible I appear to myself, for I continually have the greatest loathing for all excesses of the sort. I was always shamed by every virtuous friend . . . talked very simply with the Savior, who comforted me by his nearness. . . ." "At the Lord's Supper I

felt my Savior's nearness much more clearly than I, poor dust, deserved or expected, and my heart grew warm with love for Him." [3]

To a greater degree than is the case with Pietism and Moravianism the practice of conversion is cultivated among Methodists and similar denominations who lend to the religious life of North America a special stamp of their own. Starbuck has dedicated the whole first part of his *Psychology of Religion* to the study of conversion; and likewise an extensive chapter in Stanley Hall's *Adolescence* treats of conversion; to how great a degree religious habits can influence scientific convictions is shown by the fact that both American psychologists consider conversion as "a natural, normal, common and necessary process" for the stage of development in which life moves from a basis resting on itself (autocentric) to a foundation whose center is laid elsewhere (heterocentric).

How strong the influence of environment is on conversion is proved by the fact that only one-fifth of the cases investigated by Starbuck took place independently of outside influence. A spiritual state in the form of "consciousness of guilt or of sin" precedes conversion. Let a few significant expressions quoted by Starbuck [4] be presented here: [5] M 17. "I had experienced nothing but a great and unaccountable wretchedness." F 15. "I fought and struggled in prayer to get the feeling that God was with me." M 15. "A sense of sinfulness and estrangement from God grew on me daily." F. 16. "I had an awful feeling of helplessness." These few examples, which

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 184.
[4] Starbuck, p. 60f.
[5] M. and F. stand for male and female. The numeral indicates the age. (Tr.)

can be multiplied many times from Starbuck's abundant material, show that the converted youthful Americans of our time under similar external incitement had experiences similar to those of Moritz, Schleiermacher, and Brinkman who grew up under pietistic influences in the eighteenth century.

The sect known as The Exclusive Society of Religious Virtuosos or the Specifically Qualified,[6] before the reception of new members, has to examine them as to their suitability; the more suddenly and startlingly the moral-religious change of mind occurs, the more clearly recognizable it is. For this reason the sect favors the catastrophic course of development with its emotional disturbances, which reaches its culmination in conversion. On the other hand, the church, "the universal institution for the saving of the masses," which like the state, as Max Weber says, claims that every child belongs as a member by birth, places a much higher emphasis upon conversion. Thus in these churches there is the possibility that more or less sudden changes which might be considered as being the essence of conversion, are not interpreted and explained as such. At times the religious awakening is connected with the confirmation or with the first partaking of the Lord's Supper. A Catholic woman says: "My brother was a model; after his first communion he was transformed." Starbuck[7] has the following report of a young man: "When attending holy communion at sixteen, I was filled with a wonderful feeling and lifted up to a sense of duty. It was a spontaneous awakening within me."

In a striking way Starbuck[8] compares the extremely

[6] Weber, II, pp. 211, 222.
[7] Starbuck, p. 200.
[8] *Ibid.*, p. 298.

emotional mode of progress with that of an insect, which changes from the larva stage to that of the pupa and finally to that of a full-grown butterfly. Besides the "catastrophic" course there is another, which is recognizable by the fact that the religious person grows calmly and steadily, "as a tree which gains a little year by year; and when the process is completed, one can only say: "It was then a tiny sprout, now it is a sturdy oak." Generally persons whose development has a calm continuous course are able to report little of it. As an evaluation of the continuous course I am presenting a girl's diary notes, a critical judgment of which follows at the end.

Case A.

The girl is the only child of religious parents. Father a merchant in good circumstances. Protestant.

12½ years old: "Today I want to die. I lied again, and I have prayed so often for strength. But it will never be any different, I shall pray once more, and I already feel that tonight I shall die (she had a severe attack of dysentery), and if I do not die tonight, I shall commit suicide. First before I am dead, I shall quickly pray again. I remember how our principal was recently speaking of pardon for thieves. For if I live any longer, I shall have to lie again and again."

14½ years old: "Now confirmation is over. The door has been passed, through which the child steps forth as an adult. Over my life's path is always to stand the motto which hung over my door: Be faithful unto death. . . .

"Many serious words were said to me by parents, aunts, and other relatives, and if I take them to heart

they will help me to be able to fulfill my confirmation motto, and so enable me to attain the crown of life." A week later: "God help me so that my first Lord's Supper may be a blessing."

15½ years old: "I wish I could take part once in a Christian conference; it must be wonderful, thus for a week to speak only of one's Savior and hear Him spoken of—as my dear father is now doing." Two days later: "I should so like to be first in the class. I wonder if that is called ambition. But I should so like to give my dear parents the pleasure. May the Lord help me, for without Him it will not happen." Four weeks later: "I am being prepared for the entrance examination in C. I pray my Lord and Savior to help me in this significant turning point of my life." Five weeks later, after failing this examination: "I did not pass the examination—indeed the ways of God are wonderful. I am preparing for another school and if again I do not succeed, then I shall understand by that that the LORD has something else in view for me."

16 years old: in the new boarding school: "I get up at six o'clock, dress, converse with my God; then we have coffee together, then have family worship. . . .

"I found a friend. She is a child of God, too. . . .

"I like it here very well, because I am much under God's word and can hear so many really anointed speakers. . . .

"A week ago there was a storm here that lasted fully ten hours. Then God showed Himself again in his omnipotence and greatness. Thus children of God again recognized how great is the kindness of the Almighty, who has preserved all of us who love and know Him."

17 years old: "He is called Wonderful! I am almost dying of joy! That is not caused by the air of spring alone. In my heart it is spring too. Yesterday's meeting with 'him' is a splendid answer to prayer."

20 years old: "I saw the sea with laughing blue sky above it. I saw it enveloped in sea-mist, and when this lifted I saw it kissed by the crimson rays of the setting sun. LORD, how wonderful are Thy works! . . .

"I said 'No,' I have talked it over with God. I have no feeling for him at all. . . .

"Now I am reading all sorts of things about the modern view of life."

22 years old: "I am making myself thoroughly acquainted with commentaries of the New Testament. . . .

"Much old stuff is disappearing from my beliefs, like the beginning of the Second Article."

23 years old, after a severe illness: "Oh, if I did not have God!"

In A's notes the influence of a godly environment is clearly perceptible; the noun (Lord) and the pronouns which refer to God, and further expressions like "child of God," "crown of life," show the conventional character of A's notes. In spite of that, one has the impression that a personal development of the writer occurred, a development, indeed, which has to overcome no very strong opposition. The steady, continuous course, as A's reports present it, does not recur in such purity in the material accessible to me. The doubts of one's own worth, as they appear in the beginning of development, disappear, and neither personal mishap (failing an examination), nor love experiences, nor intellectual doubts, nor illness,

nor natural phenomena can so seriously disturb her that the calm course of development is interrupted. A third kind of development takes place midway between the catastrophic and the continuous courses; it is illustrated by

Case B.

B, the seminary student, later Volkschule teacher. Forefathers, Protestant emigrants. Parents, craftsmen, of deep piety, which, however, is never expressed in words. An earlier teacher gives this opinion of B: "melancholy, dreamy; no especially prominent capabilities. Internally strong nature, compositions show his original thoughts. No facility of expression. Conduct appears awkward; also many conflicts with the rules of the house are explained by this." As a child B prayed every day and expected for himself an especial interposition of God Himself; when this did not follow during the confirmation nor at the partaking of the Lord's Supper, it had a certain sobering effect upon him. Notes from his diary:

15½ years old: "Again I feel miserable and wretched, I do not know what may be the reason. . . . Lately doubts have come to me again followed by grievous questionings: Is there a God? What is He like? Then my character is altered in every respect; for before, when I meditated, it was easy for me to forget myself. But now? I think I am going crazy. . . . Today there was a fearful storm. Did not sleep practically all last night, but instead I reflected and meditated; almost became convinced that there is no God, or at least only a very severe one. I think I am about crazy. . . . Last night after long thought I came to this conclusion: I shall never be a regular Christian, for

the reason so easily said and yet so momentous, that way down deep I believe that there is no God. However I still believe. First an inner voice speaks to me; secondly faith works a quieting effect on me. For example, I compare faith and myself to a wanderer in the desert who is lying half fainting on the road convinced that he has no longer a chance for rescue. Then he suddenly finds a stone with various marks which he does not understand, and yet he thinks: What other reason can there be for this stone than as a sign post to an oasis? The half fainting one gains new courage, he gets up quickly and reaches his goal. Much like that is my faith constituted. I want to cease my melancholy meditations—Oh, that I may succeed! and believe in God, at one time so that, if there is a God, I shall not be entirely estranged from Him, and so that He will have to know my honest striving; at another time, because thus I shall lay my foundation for courage and endurance. Perhaps a way out will be found from the labyrinth of questions. My chief command is to be: Love thy neighbor; let that be the love, the love of God, that I shall have. If nothing else comes of it, I shall at least hope for one thing, namely, that whatever I do, that may be done to me, whether it be good or evil. Let that be my reasonable service to God. . . .

"The melancholy meditation returns. For today I considered this and that and discovered to my despair that I no longer knew at all why I could write: There is no God. I have been praying after a long time to escape my doubts in some other way. To whom? To the invisible God, who is still unknown to me and unrecognized, in whose existence I doubt and who, if

He really exists, can be only a severe and zealous God. . . . I had prayed to the unknown and doubted Being, to give me a sign of which I might know whether the Bible and our faith were fancies. I had idled about my devotions and promised that if I were not discovered I would take it as a sign. I have as yet got nothing, but I have not yet reached insight; however, on the other hand, I have become calmer. . . . I have come to God again. Have become calmer, and perhaps the time is not far off when I shall be completely reconciled with God and shall believe. My lessons in religion are bringing me to this point. I have vowed to myself that if I get a 'very good' in industry and conduct, I shall understand from that that there is a God. My gift of thinking in religious matters, of composing, I want to use for church songs. I have chosen for my next theme: 'Customary Folk Phrases, Characteristics of Secular Song Writers, and the Motives of their Poems. . . .

"If this vexation still keeps up I shall go crazy. Again I have had so mean a view of God, that if there is a God, He must be ashamed of Himself."

15¾ years old (after a bad school report): "Thoughts that I may not pass have come to me again. Prayed again today. . . .

"Been to church. Confirmation. I was fearfully bored. God is a spirit! God is life! Life is nature! The only answer not arising from man to the question: 'What is God? What is God like?' Christ gave us. He says to the Samaritan woman: 'God is a spirit.' If God is a spirit, then that is not saying that God is any person. For if God is a spirit, Christ may mean by that that He pervades everything. Every

breath of wind, every natural phenomenon, everything, even the smallest creature conceals God in itself. Now it will be said: 'Did not Christ represent Himself as the Son of (this) God, and can he say He is God's Son?' I say yes. For Christ, whom by our faith we can consider the omnipotent Savior working through his love, is the One who best conceived this Being God in nature. Now if God is nature, the greatness of His attributes is by no means obliterated; on the contrary, we can even better view them. If God is the all-pervading power, He can nevertheless be illumined by a spirit."

16 years old: "God the Holy Ghost. . . .

"As the third person of the triune Godhead, the Holy Ghost is revered by Christendom. I would not exactly say wrongly but yet unnecessarily. For can the spirit be a person in its own right, which proceeds from a person that we can think of only as a spirit; can he be something existent? I say no. God is a spirit, the Holy Ghost is His spirit. God's spirit is Holy; there is no Holy Ghost besides. Therefore God's spirit is the Holy Ghost. However, as with mankind there are not two persons present or imaginable, we can probably think the same of God. God's being is the only spirit, therefore God's spirit is equal to the Holy Ghost; what is equal is not one and the same, but just equal. It may be said: God's spirit = the Holy Ghost. . . .

"But since there is no other person in the Godhead than Christ and God the Father, we may maintain that God's spirit not only equals the Holy Ghost, but by the term Holy Ghost only God's spirit can be meant, proceeding out of God the Father and God the Son; and besides God the Father and God the Son there is no other person, the spirit of the diune God

must be one and the same with the Holy Ghost for reasons that permit no contradiction."

16½ years old (after no notes had followed for half a year): "A retrospect! I became characterless! I no longer had strength over myself to defy the devil, pleasure-seeking. I lived beyond my allowance, and since one sin grows out of another, misrepresented my expenses as in order; consequently deceived my kind parents. I neglected my parents. With horror I have to admit to myself: I almost forgot my parents. For if I had always had their sacred image before my eyes, should I have got into debt?" "Now I have a letter ready for the magazine. Would to God, it (a story) may be accepted. A stone would be lifted from my heart. Dear God, cause it (the manuscript) to be accepted. I will give Thee, or if not Thee, then the poor, a good part of my small fee. Then I would pay my debt, enrich the treasury of our club, and give my parents joy at Christmas. Dear God, pray give me the strength not to yield this time. Strengthen that on which I am now placing my whole hope. Great Spirit in Whom I believe, Thou wilt not take it amiss if now and then my senses are confused and go astray. God, Thou madest me so! I act as best I can. Again, great Spirit: grant that my manuscript be accepted, and that I perhaps may get a little money."

PRAYER OF A THINKER

Art Thou God?
Light Thou art that outshines sunlight,
That above the stars doth flare,
Life Thou art which Thou hast wakened,
Nowhere—yea and everywhere.
Art Thou God?
Art Thou God?

Go into the silent darkness
See what wonderworking's rife
Underneath the snow's soft blanket,
Gentle whispers, there is life—
There is God.

17 years old:

Beside the road in beggar's clothes
An old man in the snow.
I heard him weakly lisping: "God,
God, bread!" I shared his woe,
I stooped beside the gray old man,
But he was cold and dead.
But still I hear him call out: "God,"
And begging Him for bread. . . .

"Now I have become calmer. My heaven-storming arrogance has been broken. My guiding star is to be just hard work. Spiritually I am still dead. To be sure, I pray, but only from prudence, not from faith. I can't help it if I dissect or have to dissect everything under the microscope and then can observe only germ and atom. Yet in spite of that have grown calmer.

"What is the world?
A gloomy game.
What is the goal?
Fortune and fame,
And what kind of a hand
Holds the power?
The hand of Night.

Say, Brother Wind,
Whence comest thou
And whither bound?
Thou manchild, thou,
Whence comest thou

And whither bound,
O Brother Wind.
Thou dost know!
Whether thou com'st from naught or no?"

18 years old:

PRAYER

Shall I pray for it? Thou wilt do it of Thine own accord—
I know
But let me, for working with Thee I fancy
I shall finish it. O truth be truth.
World be real! Delusion, thou nothingness—be so in fact.
Existence be truth, truth existence!

(To the 21st year there are notes like the following, which tell of weariness with life and show the religious strain not at all, or at least only slightly.)

20 years old: "Now I feel that way again. Dissatisfaction, disgust, indifference—O insipid schoolboy life—such a taste. If I could make an end of living, raging, writing—I wonder if it will last like this. It is nothing but suffering."

20½ years old (in a letter to his only love):

"You keep me very busy. You are decadent. High desires and little capacity—finally you cannot help it. you are just a link in the great chain of happenings, which is continually paid out—paid out, a chain? Who knows. You have attained such a pretty skepticism—so handsome underneath. Then why do you keep turning up? Would it not be better for you to disappear into nothingness? I wanted to live an ideal life. I doubt whether after the many defeats and apparent recoveries (apparent victories), a real recovery is possible. What am I writing? I wonder if I am too weak for something definite, too cowardly for a last step

into the bottomless pit—The worst, most fearful thing in the world is willingness without the ability. I have thrown everything overboard, God first; and yet I am afraid to pay over the rest."

21½ years old: "Two souls in my breast. What shall I write on my banner? Death, no, captivity of love—desire—soul. Matthew 6, 24: No man can serve two masters. Then I will let the soul of my duty grow strong in the service of its grave and hoary mistress. Now I shall serve the one strict, severe goddess, Truth, or else her image, Science."

(From about 22 years of age the notes become less frequent and shorter; they refer generally to experiences of an external kind. Descriptions of states of mind disappear, an external sign that a certain proportion has entered into his mental life. After the 24th year there are no more notes.)

23 years old: "God will not let me fall. Then what have I to fear? But if God does not preserve me, if I cannot believe in the victory of truth, why shall I not perish? In this case, dying is the only good deed that is to be thought of or desired; better to be extinguished than to live a false life—My life will itself be a revelation."

CARPE DIEM

Let us ever ascend
From peak to peak,
Wandering on
Too joyful to speak
On holy heights
We'll take our stand
With joyful hearts
Survey the land

And when again
We descend to the vale;
May laughter and joy
And song prevail.

The course of B's religious development is especially rich in violent emotional experiences. These find expression in the diary in exclamations like "I am going crazy" when he was fifteen, and in the thoughts of suicide up to his twentieth year. But there is a significant difference between this and the catastrophic course which, in conversion, reaches a definite culmination in which tranquillity suddenly appears, and the convert has no realization of the agitation which may possibly set in somewhat later. B's development does not show this sudden transition from an experience full of strong emotion to calmness; instead there follows a gradual dying out; the emotional agitations at twenty-one have lost something in severity and strength, until at about the twenty-fourth year tranquillity comes. The slowly growing conviction of security in God has become so strong that from now on proportion and steadfastness of the whole mental life are assured. The poem at the end of the notes with its thoroughly symbolical intent points to the lofty frame of mind of a steady spiritual growth. Since B's development shows evidences both of the catastrophic course and of the continuous, it must be designated as a mixed form. If we ask about the underlying causes of the different forms, we shall find them in the differences of temperaments. A passionate, impetuous temperament doubtless inclines to a highly agitated emotional development as Starbuck has already shown. Weakened nerves and sickliness, as we must assume in Reiser and as is reported by Lotte Schleiermacher, surely tend to make the religious development unsteady and impulsive. Allusion has already been made to the encouragement which the catastrophic course of development receives through

the conversion customs of certain religious denominations.

The light-hearted and even-tempered in contrast with the melancholy will usually have a calm and peaceful development. Starbuck presents several circumstances which in his opinion promote the calmer development: in the first place he names the child's religious environment. But not any religious environment is meant, only one in which piety reigns, which avoids excesses and does not put the emphasis so much on religious doctrine as on life. Above everything, the teachers and the pastors who instruct the youths in religion must take care that no contradiction is to be traced between their teachings and living. For the youth who is naturally critical and inclined toward radical interpretations, such contradiction is sure to lead to considerable emotional disturbance.[9]

A grew up in a family and a boarding school in an atmosphere which was favorable to religious development. In the literary productions of such gymnasium students as sons of merchants, in cases in which the development takes a "negative" direction, one does not find that sort of violent inner agitation which the diaries and poems of young seminary students display. Religious instruction in the seminary, on which more time was spent than in other schools and which at times made no small demands on the intellect and on the memory, and the regular family worship and church going, the neglect of which was punished, often gave B, and C, as well as D and P occasion for inner religious conflicts.[10] The life in the boarding school, apart from the periods of actual instruction, favors the further

[9] P. 59.
[10] See Appendix D, p. 118.

exchange of thought of young people and thus leads to an increase of the tension. Diversions, such as family life affords, there are none. The natural impulse of youths for freedom and activity, to which certain limits are set by the house rules, tends to pursue its course unhindered in the conversation of the intellectually like-minded.

In the narrow common life at the brotherhood's school at Barby, young Schleiermacher and some of his friends at one time formed a club of "Independent Thinkers," in which was forecast their later freedom of the Moravians. The boys and young men of the nineteenth-century schools of the brotherhood still live in the two novels of H. Anders Krüger, in which he has given such a vivid account of their religious conflicts. Evidence of the degree to which the club strengthened and deepened individual religious experience is furnished by the extravagant poems which sixteen-year-old N dedicated to the Bible circle to which he belonged.[11] The youth who has become conscious of his own individual ego keeps zealous watch lest his personal freedom be touched. If in recognition of his own weakness he has limits placed upon his freedom, these violent disturbances of development may be the consequence. Like any other constraint, one in religious things is calculated to interfere with a calm even development. Starbuck[12] presents the report of a man, who tells how powerfully Sabbath keeping was impressed on him as a child; the report goes: "On Sundays we could not whittle, go faster than a walk, go down to the river, laugh, play in any way, whistle, etc. No one who has not passed through it can imag-

[11] See Appendix, p. 123.
[12] Starbuck, p. 302.

ine how I felt as Saturday night drew on. It was as if I were about to walk through the valley of the shadow of death. We were obliged to spend the day at church and Sunday School, both of which I loathed." The affecting child tragedy of little Meretlein in *Grünen Heinrich,* which Gottfried Keller composed from notes of his Pietist days, will always furnish the best example of a religious upbringing that seriously interfered with a young man's spiritual and bodily development.

As a further condition for a steady course of development Starbuck states that "it must correspond at every point with the child's needs." He illustrates this by the story of a clergyman known to him, who willingly entered into the doubts of his youthful son and thus helped him to overcome his mental unrest. And Herman Anders Krüger tells of the thorough understanding on the part of educators of the religious need of a pupil in his Moravian boy's story, *Gottfried Kämpfer.* In order to avoid all unnecessary tension so good a friend of the youth of big cities as the Hamburg pastor, Clemens Schultz,[13] considers necessary for this a church opportunity, not a religious opportunity ("religious opportunity is nonsense!"). On the part of the evangelical church there is an inclination to consider religious disturbances in youth unavoidable, for "a strong subjective autonomous element" [14] is characteristic of Protestantism as a religion. If on the part of Catholics the harmonious growth of the child's religion into that of the adult is considered best, one must also admit that the development is very hard to attain without violent disturbances in the period of storm and stress. Jakob Hofmann [15] reports of the

[13] Schultz, p. 40.
[14] Richert, p. 47.
[15] Hofmann, p. 247.

Catholics questioned by him, that only a fifth had been free of conflicts and struggles. The influence of the Catholic Church is usually so strong that it "fixes permanently the mode of contemplation and the appropriate religious feeling even in the case of radical changes of view," [16] as Wilhelm Stahlin brings out in a discussion of Coenobium's Almanac of religious psychology. August Messer's story in *Glauben und Wissen,* which tells of his inward development, illustrates this fact in the case of a single individual. In the last remarks we are touching a field that is to receive special treatment under the title "Direction of Development."

To recapitulate, we have pointed out the significance of the religious community for the course of development of an individual. The continuous course is unusual in all ultra religious communities, for these sects favor that culminating in "conversion." Although the church considers the continuous development as the ideal, yet we have to accept the "mixed course" as the commonest form among her members.

[16] Z. f. *Relig. Psy.,* VI, p. 153.

CHAPTER IV

DIRECTION OF DEVELOPMENT

WHETHER the youth's religious development resembles the continuous or the catastrophic form, he strives to grasp the religious ideas imparted to him by his environment, while they are generally accepted uncritically by the child. Then, too, the child in most cases shows merely a receptive attitude toward religion, but the youth of his own accord begins to take the religious tradition seriously. When 12½ years old, A has such a strong feeling of guilt after a lie that she wants to die. From 15 on B worries over the existence and the nature of God; and as he doubts God, so does he doubt his own worth. B is surprised that religious questions take such violent hold on him, while earlier he easily disregarded them.

Further development may lead to a deepening and strengthening of transmitted religious ideas: it may thus be positive as in A's case. But the development may also lead to a rejection of the religious tradition, to a break with it. The development then, as in D's case,[1] takes a negative turn. It may also waver in the direction it takes. Seventeen-year-old B broke with the religion of his childhood; his prayer at 18 points to a progressive religious ecstasy, as opposed to the primitive petitions and vows of his 15th and 16th years; at 20 he feels himself a materialist, and at 23

[1] See Appendix.

he is again in a positive relation with religion that is subsequently maintained.

It often happens that youths in large cities renounce church and religion as E did. As to what Gunther Dehn says, anyone who is at all familiar with the circumstances will agree: "I have never been able to discover traces of a painful parting with ideas that have become dear to me in childhood; and more, I have always found that one all too quickly appropriates the fine phrases which testify less of pious mental conflicts than of thoughtless superficiality as, for example, that the priests are deceiving the world, that religion is bosh and that science has proved that there is no God." In this case one can no more speak of real development than one can of a sudden change in the form of faith when there is no inward motive for it; in such a development one has to understand nothing more than a change in the existing environmental conditions.

Likewise if one means by development the steady cultivation and extension of an existing talent, power, or function, then in a violent break with traditional religion, such as Gunther Dehn describes, one should not use the word development: for even the concept of "negative development," which may lead to a complete rejection of religion, presupposes an overcoming of the existing condition from within. Such a break as Dehn describes, which consists in uncritically giving up a tradition, means that another tradition will be accepted just as uncritically and credulously. Within the newly received tradition a development toward a religious substitute is conceivable, somewhat as one proceeds from mere imitative babbling of socialistic dogmas to a deeper understanding of them, then learns to prize the dogmas less, becomes more patient with

those who think differently, but still holds to the socialistic idea with credulous fervor and is ready to make sacrifices for its realization. A negative development of the religious substitute is just as possible: experience and reflection may so operate that the value of the community as over against that of the self-conscious, happily creative individual is less highly prized, and the ideal of a free and harmonious personality or of a super-man may take on a religious coloring.

CHAPTER V

BEGINNING AND DURATION OF DEVELOPMENT

ONLY in the cases that show a catastrophic course can there be any certainty about the time of its beginning. When the development runs continuously, the transitions from the child's religion to that of the youth are fluent and unnoticeable. Physical maturity furnishes no dependable hint of the religious, since bodily and spiritual developments do not run parallel. The reserve which the youth often shows toward adults in respect to his spiritual life considerably minimizes the value of a stranger's observation. All statements that are made from memory about the beginning of the religious development one must accept with caution: only when a first religious awakening is connected with the confirmation, the first confession, or some similar experience, or when conversion took place, can the testimony as to time, made from memory, lay any claim to trustworthiness. Sure signs that the religious development has begun, however, we can recognize in the observations in the diary of the adolescent, and likewise inferences can be drawn from the youthful poems as to the time of the religious awakening, for the heightened religious experience strives for expression.

When the diary is given up, we may conclude that the storm and stress period is at an end. On the basis

of the material available for this study, it would seem that the religious development had definitely begun with the completion of the 15th year and that after the 22nd year came a definite cessation. Starbuck has more carefully investigated the age at which the conversions occurred while incidentally furnishing evidence of other matters. Other American investigators have also tried to establish the age of conversion. From the different investigations of Stanley Hall,[1] Coe, Starbuck, and Lancaster it appears that the religious awakening begins between 12 and 20 years of age. But the conversions are not distributed evenly over these years. In women the process usually begins earlier than in men. If the statistical collections of Starbuck and of Stanley Hall are dependable, in men most conversion occurs at 16, while in women very many conversions occur not only at 16 but at 13. As early as 9 years of age conversions sometimes occur, according to Starbuck, and according to Hammond's investigation the 10th year is one of the most frequent! But we must ask somewhat doubtfully whether one can at such an early age really have had experiences which are of fundamental significance for the whole future development. Hammond's important time difference is perhaps explained by the fact that he does not employ the concept of conversion as a sudden change in religious habits of life so sharply as other investigators; perhaps where conversion at the age of childhood is spoken of, a "first" deep impression is meant, which is subsequently interpreted as religious.

By Catholics the day of their first communion is sometimes given as the time at which they awake to a religious life. Since the first communion occurs as

[1] Stanley Hall, p. 288.

early as the 12th year or before, there is here a certain contradiction to our supposition that we may speak of religious development as more or less coincident with the beginning of mental and physical maturation. We meet this contradiction by admitting that we are dealing not only with the experience connected with the first communion but also, as in the case of American child conversions, with those of the "first" impressions of emotion, the seizure, the awful wonderment which later gain a religious significance; or we have to admit the Catholic brotherhood of faith works for an early beginning of development. On the basis of the existing observation material, the contradiction cannot be reconciled. A later beginning of religious development is indicated primarily by the fact that the other higher spiritual functions in the normal youth usually unfold at the earliest at about the 14th year. (By spiritual functions we mean that complex of mental conduct which has reference to the objective system of belief, as well as to the social structures, to domestic economy, to science and religion.) It is significant that the religious development seems first to appear in the 16th year in the life of the genial Otto Braun, whose spiritual life developed with such astonishing rapidity.

CHAPTER VI

LOVE AND RELIGION IN ADOLESCENCE

FEUERBACH and other defenders of materialism have made the attempt to derive the spiritual life and with it also the religious from physical experiences. More recently Sigmund Freud and his disciples have attributed the higher mental states and processes including the religious to the physical sensations of the sexual libido. Girgensohn, in his book on "the mental components of the religious experience," has strikingly criticized the psycho-analyst theories—for they are theories and not facts—and prescribed proper limits. If we here contrast our view with that of the psycho-analysts, it is because there have been repeated attempts made by them to explain youth's religious development on the basis of the sexual. Even if no sexual factors can be discovered in the religious development of adults, still that of adolescents may possibly be somewhat dependent upon them. We shall next, therefore, have a few psycho-analysts speak, and then we shall criticize them on the basis of our data.

In his very constructive essay—"Leonardo da Vinci, a Psycho-sexual Study of an Infantile Reminiscence," Freud writes: "In the parental complex we thus recognize the roots of religious need; the almighty just God, and kindly nature appear to us as grand sublimations of father and mother, or rather as revivals and restorations of the infantile conceptions of

both parents. Religiousness is biologically traced to the long period of helplessness and need of help of the little child; the child grows up and realizes his loneliness and weakness in the presence of the great forces of life, perceives his condition as in childhood and seeks to disavow his despair through a regressive revival of the protecting forces of childhood.[1]

In like manner the English psycho-analytical physician and psychologist, Havelock Ellis,[2] actually traces a wife's frequent youthful storms and stresses to frustrated sex impulses. And in the appendix of his book, as a typical example, he publishes the report of a cultured English wife and mother: "As a child and girl I had very strong religious feelings. . . . These feelings were much the same as I experienced later sexually; I felt toward God what I imagined I should like to feel for my husband if I married.[3]

Stanley Hall, who was the first university professor to recognize Freud,[4] refers to the close connection which exists between the religious awakening and puberty. For Stanley Hall [5] the new insight into the parallelism between religion and love signifies perhaps the chief of the many important contributions which the modern psychology has made to piety and is one of the most sublime and fruitful themes of our day. He designates 12 points, in which religion and love show the closest similarity, particularly in youth:[6]

1. Both risk death, but may however triumph over it.
2. Both make the soul highly sensitive to nature.

[1] Freud, pp. 103-104.
[2] Ellis, p. 197.
[3] P. 229; cf. M., p. 122f.
[4] Pfister, p. 11.
[5] Stanley Hall, *Adolescence*, II, 293.
[6] *Ibid.*, 295ff.

3. Both have their fanaticisms.
4. Lovers are nest builders; religious persons build temples.
5. Religion, like love and the sea, ebbs and flows, modes of abnegation alternating with those of aggression and assertion.
6. Love and religion incite the soul to rhythmic movements in poetry, song and dance.
7. Not only do both abase but both exalt the self.
8. Both have their most varied and accurately prescribed forms of etiquette and ceremony.
9. Love and religion tend to exalt all possible objects of nature to fetishes and to worship them.
10. Man and woman in the course of history have mutually influenced each other, and thus man and God mutually influence each other.
11. The Christian loves as the woman does; there is a quiet, retirement and fond contemplation of the image of the dear one.
12. Once more, love and religion are analogous in that both vivify and lend the immense influence of their vitality to almost every act or object.

Such parallels, according to Stanley Hall, might be easily multiplied. True love and religious experience are almost impossible before adolescence. The birthday of the strongest passion is the day of the greatest need of religion, and is also the period when the calentures of both are in greatest danger of becoming confused one with the other, so that devotional and passional states may become mutually provocative. It is only in later life that their spheres become more distinct.

Stanley Hall's analogies contain a few correct observations, and much besides that is false and trivial. Some of the similarities mentioned by him are so gen-

eral that they suit other ages quite as well as adolescence and may apply to other life situations. (For instance, Point 3: the desire for power and rule may also degenerate into fanaticism; Point 4: the domestic impulse may also cause building; Point 5: conditions of exhaustion and lassitude follow those of mental excitement.) Further the designated points assert all sorts of things about the same and similar effects, without anything convincing being asserted about the mutual relation of love and religion. Concerning Point 2 it is to be noted that love not only arouses a feeling for nature but generally also the emotional life; for every true love causes an arousal and increase of the customary psychic states designated as "feelings," a condition which is also favorable to religion.

Indeed love is able so to inspire a youth that he represents in poems the object of his affection as of divine or heavenly appearance. But these are not cases of religious experience; expressions and figures of speech are only borrowed from the religious sphere. Let a youthful poem of 16-year-old Friedrich Hebbel,[7] *Longing—To L,* serve as an illustration of this process:

Sweet one, divine one, give ear unto me
Give hope to my poor, pleading quest,
For I'm no more frightened by life's stormy sea
Thru night and thru mist I come gladly to thee
To warm myself at thy breast.
Should worlds cast themselves from their limitless space
In my path, I'd fly eagerly through,
Heavenly exalted one, thee to embrace
I should fly to the clouds, even heaven I'd face—
Yea, hell itself would I subdue.

The pathos of these lines discloses the devastating

[7] Hebbel, *Werke,* VII, pp. 9, 21.

experience which called them forth in a somewhat veiled form.

In another youthful poem of 17-year-old Hebbel, *Friendship,* also directed "to L" he actually creates a myth which tells how Love comes down from heaven and, together with Youth, pours "out of his eternal abundance the warmest of divine feeling into his cold heart," but how Satan "slyly steals the veil" from Love and with it clothes "the very sly devil Perfidy," so that he now goes about thus disguised in it to "kill by lust and deceit the beautiful faith in the worth of man, in God and eternity."

When Stanley Hall speaks of the interdependence of puberty and religion, he should more fully substantiate this claim. The conception of sexuality, even, is not adhered to in its original physical meaning by Stanley Hall and other psycho-analysts. While Freud in his early writings defined this concept in strictly physical terms, he later saw the need of giving it a much broader interpretation. He writes: "We assign to the sexual life also tender feelings, which are derived from the primitive sexual emotions, even when these emotions are shut off from their original sexual goal or have exchanged this goal for another, no longer sexual. For that reason we prefer to speak of psycho-sexuality, laying stress on the fact that one should not overlook nor under-value the psychic factor of the sexual life. We use the word, sexuality, in the same comprehensive sense as the word, love.[8] In this word of Freud there is confession that it is no longer practicable to conceive sexual physical sensations as the immediate cause of spiritual experiences.

No more may it be proved that physical maturity

[8] Freud, '20, I, 92.

causally conditions the psychic. On the basis of his material collected in the Berlin Fortbildungschule, Lau arrives at this conclusion: "The period of most rapid growth and of puberty is accompanied by the awakening of the ethical personality and the transition of the child's emotional life into that of the adult." Starbuck made similar statements in respect to the religious life of youth; according to Starbuck the period of most rapid bodily growth is the time when conversion is most likely to occur; on the other hand conversion and puberty tend to supplement each other in time rather than to coincide.[9] The statistical collections of Lau and Starbuck draw no conclusions which really supplement or enrich the impression which the watchful observer of young people gets from association with them; the physical and psychic maturing processes generally begin about the same time. But while the sexual ripening process ends at about the sixteenth year with boys, and with girls at about the fifteenth, "psychic puberty" lasts till the twentieth year. But for the religious development it is important that it begin rather late and last over to an age in which the process of physical maturing has long since reached its end.[10]

For a great number of cases of morbid religiosity Pfister [11] has shown sexual components. But when it is maintained by psycho-analysts, as by Bleuler in the *Zeitschrift für Religion Psychologie*,[12] that onanism and similar sexual perversions precede youthful consciousness of sin, then surely this claim goes too far. In the numerous cases given by Starbuck there is no

[9] Starbuck, pp. 38, 41.
[10] Cf. Chapter V.
[11] P. 351.
[12] III, 5.

evidence for this; and also in the manuscript material on which the present work is based no confirmation of this assertion can be found.

Neither have I as yet found proof of another claim of Freud; namely, that psycho-analysis "reminds us daily how youthful persons lose their religion and faith as soon as their father's authority is destroyed." In B's diary are passages which point to an intimate relation to his father at a time when his faith in God was already destroyed; the cases of D and E are similar in this respect. A confirmation of Bleuler's claim as well as of Freud's appears in Strindberg's autobiography;[13] but here too the conflict with the parents is neither the only nor the immediate cause of the break with religious faith, and besides the consciousness of sin is artificially increased by his reading.

In cases of sickness and degeneration, as those reported by Pfister show, sex feeling may be the means by which the religious life receives a special coloring; but the religious experience itself is always independent and primary and not to be accounted for by any of its disparate elements; and no psychological analysis will ever be in position to reveal the mystery of the experiencing of God. Of psycho-analysis we must demand that it point out the sexual components in the religious experience itself, which it will never succeed in doing. Girgensohn in his studies in the psychology of religion observes that no sexual motives are visible to the unbiased reader, and the subjects, Girgensohn calls them "observers," "were aware in no place of the concurrence of sexual motives"; and also that there was "not the slightest cause" for concealing them.[14]

[13] P. 138.
[14] Girgensohn, pp. 418-419.

In the diaries and reports lying before me as in Flournoy's observation, the sexual-erotic factor appears in no such way as to permit one to speak of it as a leading or dominating motive in religious development. On the other hand, when it is said by psycho-analysts that unconscious sexual components, in changed or "sublimated" form, have participated in the building up of the religious experience, Girgensohn truly remarks: "Now that is the transforming function, the real dominating motive, the real creator of the spiritual process. Then indeed the sex feeling is not actually the substantial one, but it is only matter for the mysterious spiritual process which changes and transforms it." [15]

In reference to the derivation of religion among the adherents of psycho-analysis there are different conceptions; one of Pfister's publications [16] attests this: "One has to be on his guard against the inclination to conceive of religion merely as libido at a higher level." The normal civilized young man is not a pure creature of sex to such an extent as is the youth of primitive peoples, whose awakening sexuality immediately finds satisfaction, indeed whose whole training is directed toward this goal.[17] For, in the case of young people in civilized communities, there is usually a longer time of waiting between sexual maturity and sexual enjoyment, at least if there has been no untimely seduction—during which time the sensuous desire, the libido, undergoes "sublimation." The sexual-physical tendencies early yield to more spiritual ones; for the "love" of youth is not so much sexuality as amatory sentiment. Love in this sense, which causes the young person to feel in the object of his inclination not so much the sentient

[15] *Ibid.*, p. 420.
[16] Pfister, pp. 352, 266.
[17] Cf. Franke.

being as the spiritual fulfillment of his own ego, enriches his whole mental life in an unsuspected degree and frequently makes him for the first time able to understand the everlasting fullness and beauty of existence. "His eye seeth the heavens open." In the youth who is suffering from self-consciousness and loneliness, longing awakes to embrace the universe with all his might; but in this longing we see with Spranger "the heart of the religious process, just as much as when it appears as a struggle for God or for mental unity." [18]

The beatitude that begets pure love may lead one to abandon himself to the universe with holy reverence and feel himself one with it, or humbly and devoutly to honor a higher Being as the giver of this happiness. But when love has lost its spirituality and has the taint of the ugly, bestial, and common, it may work dread and horror in him who thus experiences it, and may cause him to regard the whole world of sense as low and despicable and to oppose to it a spiritual, ideal world to come. Renunciation of the world, as both Augustine and Tolstoy say in their confessions, is caused by such experiences. But whoever does not possess the constructive power for the building of an ideal world, disgust for the world may drive into religious despair or into suicide. In the story "Volodya," [19] Anton Chekhov represents such a case with affecting realism. It is characteristic of eroticism and religious experiences that in them the ego of a person finds its fulfillment through another ego, and this devotion to the "thou" is marked by an especially strong feeling tone. Speaking figuratively, these feelings may

[18] Kultur und Erziehung, p. 241.
[19] In his collection, *The Lady with the Dog and Other Stories.*

mix and strengthen each other, as is shown by a note of 17-year-old A: "I am almost dying of joy. . . . In my heart it is spring too. . . . Yesterday's meeting with 'him' is a splendid answer to prayer."

Similar observations cannot disguise the fact that religion by its very nature is quite different from eroticism. Inasmuch as Girgensohn acknowledges "the important problem of strengthening the emotions" in relation to physical resonance and to religious feeling,[20] a similar problem may be taken up for the more spiritually directed love of youth. The adolescent often borrows expressions and images from the language of love, in order to express the meaning of his religious experience. The writer of the diary published by Charlotte Bühler, in which the clarifying and enlightening tendencies come out strongly, sometimes experiences religious moods. At such times the 16½-year-old Protestant girl turns in prayer to the Virgin Mary![21] "O Mary, I am so grateful, that thou hast sent me a man, thou dear one." It is specifically the feminine aspect of Godhood which the diarist experienced, indeed, in such force that the tendency toward enlightenment once natural to her and her Protestantism sometimes gives way before this form of worship required by Catholicism. Sometimes in other cases, too, there may result from the love of youth a condition which is contrary to its intellectual unity so characteristic that Stern in his history of mankind parallels the age of youth with the age of enlightenment.

[20] P. 415.
[21] P. 71.

CHAPTER VII

THE INTELLECTUAL UNITY OF YOUTHFUL RELIGIOUS DEVELOPMENT

If we closely examine the affecting style of Schiller's youthful poems, in order to penetrate to the original experience of the young poet, we find here, too, especially in the songs dedicated to "Laura," the close relation of love and religion. To both there is a strong intellectual cast so that the religion of Schiller then nearly twenty-one is almost metaphysics. In Schiller's youthful poems the intellect exercises a constructive activity, by comparing his conception of the world with religion. On the other hand, in the earlier stages his thought exercises a solvent and destructive effect on the religious ideas which the youth had held in his childhood.

We have seen that the child in a normal manner accepts credulously and uncritically the religious tradition of his environment. With increasing years, when he has sharpened his eye for reality and his thought processes have strengthened, like others he begins to review and examine his religious ideas more closely. He discovers contradictions between sensuously experienced reality, the conception of the world furnished by natural science, on the one hand, and the world of religious thought on the other. He tries to harmonize his whole experience and knowledge, but

he has to recognize that many of the religious thoughts transmitted to him and the thoughts further developed by him in imagination cannot be retained and reconciled. In them doubt begins. First, such matters of faith are questioned and overthrown as appear to contradict sensuously experienced reality. "There are no devils with horns and pitchforks, or someone must have seen them," or "Heaven is only blue sky. Nobody knows where Heaven is." [1] Biblical miracles are questioned: "No man can walk on water." Then his doubt transfers to church dogmas, the divinity of Christ, the Trinity. More and more of the church dogmas are discarded, until at last the whole structure falls in ruins along with the belief in the personality and existence of God.

The development here indicated, in which brooding intelligence gives up one article of faith after another, proceeds without interruption. In articulate, intellectually inclined natures, this process may be typical. But the trend of the development need not be unconditionally negative. It is possible that single dogmas may cease to be given credence while the general direction remains positive, as A's example shows. And the doubts mentioned by Messer did not at first change anything in his positive development; not until the end of the adolescent period did his "central skepticism begin, the doubt as to whether this world's misfortune and misery excludes the possibility of faith in God the Father"; then Messer was estranged from his church and became, at least in theory, an adherent of materialism.

In many youths at certain times there appears a leaning toward materialism. Haeckel's World-prob-

[1] Schreiber, p. 58.

lems are favorite readings in this period to which spiritual stirrings usually bring a quick recovery. The period becomes dangerous for the whole later development if a practical materialism grows out of the theoretical. At this stage, then, begins an estrangement from the spiritual world. When Anton Reiser saw criminals executed, "man seemed to him so worthless and insignificant that as a result he became possessed by the idea of bestial dismemberment." Sometimes he "so far forgot himself in continued observation of an animal that for a moment he actually believed he had experienced the kind of existence of such a creature." In B's notes there is this sentence: "O, what a pleasure to be a dog and to bark at the world!"

Starbuck [2] distinguishes this period of alienation from that of storm and stress and indicates the nature of the difference by means of a few typical phrases. Mental states during the period of storm and stress are described in expressions like the following: "I had a very bitter feeling." "I chafed against restraint." "I was filled with mental distress." These, on the contrary, represent the feeling during alienation: "I was gloomy and cynical." "I came to a state of desperate indifference." "I gave up the search for God and no longer cared even to die." Starbuck sees in alienation "the natural outgrowth of doubt; one reasons, analyzes, and criticizes; there is less feeling of any kind." He may not be correct in this one-sided, intellectual conception of alienation.

In the case of Anton Reiser, the estrangement arose from an unfortunate moral situation; and B wrote the words published at a time when he was suffering from a troublesome cough and general lassitude. As a rule,

[2] Starbuck, pp. 244, 245, 250.

the youth seldom thinks logically and consistently; usually his thinking is mixed with strong emotions, "intuitive" and often impulsive. We have already referred to the intense feelings of dissatisfaction which were accompanied by skepticism and which sometimes in the case of B led to thoughts of suicide. Earlier, B had heard doubts expressed concerning the existence of God. "When I thought about it," he wrote, "it was easy for me to treat it with indifference." Now night after night he ponders and then arrives at a denial of God's existence. A bit later he shrinks from this consequence and consoles himself with a sort of pragmatism, which he justifies in his allegory of the traveler in the desert. He seeks for a substitute for his abandoned religion in love for his neighbor. A few weeks later he has become dubious about his denial of God's existence—again entirely through his own thinking; he even prays again. Further, the next notation indicates a very primitive belief in miracles, which is not even morally free from objection. When he desires to influence God so that he may escape a deserved punishment, B has again drawn near to God and hopes for another sign. He prays in his distress; but divine service at church consoles him little. Consequently he makes the effort to understand a few dogmas and to reconcile them with the understanding. In the confused thought processes that proceed from the expression, "God is spirit," he arrives at pantheism. But a little later meditation on the Holy Ghost brings him to a belief in a diune personal God. The last words at this time, "from reasons that permit no contradiction," are significant, for in them is the self-confidence and assurance characteristic of youthful thinking.

After a longer pause the diary notes begin again with self indictments. Again B begs God for a sign and even takes an oath. This points to an entirely primitive worship. The poem, "A Thinker's Prayer," appearing not much later, when he was sixteen, carries in it traces of confused thinking, and the last lines indicate a belief that there is a soul in everything (pantheism). The poem written when he was seventeen betrays doubts of God's goodness. But he prays only "out of prudence." The next poems announce disbelief arising from want of knowledge about the last things in the world and in the life of man. In his eighteenth year B again writes a prayer. The stage of primitive religion is now finally passed; beholding God mystically, he feels himself working in harmony with the Eternal, doing good in the world. But the development proceeds. B again reaches a condition of skepticism and materialism when at twenty he recognizes that his youthful poetic dream is not being fulfilled, for his self-criticism teaches him that his poetic ability falls far below his desire. An unfortunate love affair, during this same period, he feels to be less tragic than having to give up the vocation of his liking. In devotion to his calling as a teacher and in scientific activity B at last finds satisfaction. Subsequently skepticism is given up and positive religious development finally sets in, pragmatic considerations having a part in this last change.

B's development had its beginning in a dogmatic belief in God; it led back again to faith in God having followed a course of violent emotional disturbances and of radical doubt and skepticism. But the belief in God at the end is different from that in the beginning.

Most of the church dogmas, like those of the Trinity, and the divinity of Christ, have been given up, as has also the belief in the personal interference of God for the sake of one's physical well-being. Even in great danger of battle B was not able to ask for the preservation of his life.

But thinking has not only worked negatively by solving transmitted ideas of faith; it has also had a positive influence: God has become greater, so great and absolute that B prefers quietly to worship the unsearchable without forming any definite concept of Him. Instead of the selfish wishes, with which the child and even the sixteen-year-old youth approached the Most High, comes submission to the divine will and the attempt, if possible, to do justice to every one of life's demands. Among the influences which turned B's thinking in this direction are especially to be mentioned the writings of German mystics, extracts from Thomas à Kempis, and Ekkehart, as well as poems of the Mohammedan Omar Khayyam (in the translation of Count Schack). Personal encouragement on the part of the teachers of religion or the clergy played a very insignificant rôle in B's case. Heavy blows of fate, sickness and the like, which exercised a traceable influence on the religious thinking of A and C,[3] B did not experience. How far his early life experiences decisively influenced B's thinking, cannot be discovered from the diary.

If we try to understand religious development by reference to the intellectualistic demands of adolescents, we may say that they take a personal attitude toward the objective contents of belief, and analyzing

[3] See p. 116.

them try to justify them before their intellects, and so form for themselves their own religious convictions; with certain religious types to which the cases observed by us belong, there comes also a rationalizing and ethicalizing of the contents of faith.

CHAPTER VIII

SOCIO-ETHICAL INFLUENCES

"DOUBT seems to belong to youth as its natural heritage," Starbuck affirms [1] on the basis of his statistical collections; according to these it appears that more than two-thirds of all adolescents pass through a period of doubt. The value of Starbuck's results is lessened by the fact that he did not distinguish sharply enough between the occasions for doubt and the different kinds. Doubt does not necessarily arise from purely rational reflection; often it has moral causes. The doubt of God's fatherly love experienced by Goethe and Ellen Kay in childhood and by Messer toward the end of the adolescent period was due to moral considerations. Of a socio-ethical sort is the doubt which sometimes begins in the life of Christians and generally leads to a denial of Christianity. In one of the manuscript reports G, a young man twenty-two years old, after he has told of the religious faith of his childhood, writes: "People think they act entirely in harmony with their belief; and yet how often have I had to deal with those whose actions I knew were very different from their talk. In this, above all, greatness lies—to lead a truly devout life and not, like some who are very earnest about these things, foolishly renounce the externalities of such a

[1] Starbuck, p. 232.

life,—Sunday church-going and so forth." With C, too, similar thoughts play a rôle. "There are clergymen who act in their sermons as if they had spoken with the Lord God himself. . . ."). Starbuck presents a series of corresponding statements.

Very often, unanswered prayers give occasion for doubting God's goodness and justice, as the example of the boy Bareiss showed.[2] Stronger emotions are usually more characteristic of moral doubts, than of those that follow purely rational reflection; when moral doubt as to the object of worship attains any real strength, there generally follows a renunciation of the religion of childhood. Other youths reject prayer as egoistic and selfish, which for the child's prayer is usually true; of prayer as such, however, it is false. But youth inclines to generalization, and particularly in ethical matters his judgments are very severe. In consequence youth is still inspired by the majesty of Christ and his teachings when he has broken with the church's belief in God.

B, at 15½, doubting God, recognizes love for one's neighbor as the "first commandment" and describes it as "the love of God." C writes: "The greatness of Jesus is his profound thinking and the fact that he gives to so many a deep tranquillity of soul . . . but it is a mistake to represent Him as the actual Son of God." In J's letter (to H) we read. "To me there are two possibilities for the word religion. The first is our present church belief, as it has been taught for centuries by pastors and priests, belief in the omnipresent, all-seeing, all-controlling, omniscient God, belief in heaven and in life after death, the communion of the saints, and many other beautiful things. The

[2] Pp. 35-36.

second possibility, which I have also followed, is that which understands by the term religion any love of one's fellow-men, to help and aid them. That is the true Christian religion as Christ practiced it. I cannot possibly call good what the preacher preaches from his Bible. That is stuff for little children, but never for reasonable, thinking people who know exactly for instance how earth and man began."

As in B's meditations J's last words exemplify that certainty and sufficiency which is natural to youthful thinking. Yes, just as B at the same time that he was already inclined toward radical doubts was still clinging to a notably primitive belief in miracles, so we find the same contradiction in J's thinking, when he writes in the continuation of his letter: "But I cannot get rid of the thought of a power which controls my fate. Only one example: One day in my business I was collecting money and by mistake was given five marks too much. After a moment's hesitation I gave the extra money back to the customer. The evening of the same day I found a five-mark piece on the street. Was that to be considered merely a coincidence? The thought came to me, 'The five marks were meant for you, you were meant to have them! Or is that only the everlastingly hammered-in faith in an omniscient God? However the matter caused me to ponder deeply and I don't know what to think. I should like to free myself from church mummery and turn my faith toward my own self, and yet the thought of the power governing my fate still binds me."

J is of a social nature and ethically disposed. In spite of this he is led by his belief in signs to keep this discovery to himself. But that does not keep him from doubting miracles and providence generally. The

influence of an environment hostile to the church is clearly recognizable in the words "hammered-in faith" and "church mummery," and likewise by his rejection of the clergy and the Bible. The same hostility to the church and free thinking does not prevent other youths from being subject to confused superstitions. Belief in omens, charms and fortune-telling is especially widespread among young girls. Thoughts about the mysterious future, which arise in young minds, cause them like the primitive folk of olden time to try to lift the thick veil which hangs before the life to come. The superstitious thoughts which appear among older school girls (see above) are still to be found in those who have left school. While children's superstition is harmless enough, more seriously and passionately embraced, it often leads them when a little older into unhappiness or even into serious misdeeds.[3]

As we have seen, ethical doubts are directed toward the object of religious belief (for instance, in the problem of evil); but they may refer toward the subject, that is toward the young person's own self. We find this type especially among those religious communions in which as with Pietists, Methodists, and similar denominations, children are taught to consider their natural, sensuous, impulsive life as sinful and depraved. Thus especially those youths who naturally incline to the type described by James as "sick souls" are tormented by a consciousness of sin and at the same time by doubts of their own worth. Anton Reiser's life story is full of reports of such distress which often nourishes thoughts of suicide.[4] The letters of the Schleiermacher brother and sister which have been

[3] See p. 131.
[4] See pp. 230, 258, 270.

mentioned also tell of such conflicts. Starbuck [5] marshalls a whole series of such self-torments.

A few of Starbuck's numerous reports may be cited, for they are characteristic of the consciousness of sin of many youths. M.16. "For three months it seemed as if God's spirit had withdrawn from me. There seemed to be a desolation of soul. Fear took hold of me. For a week I was on the border of despair." F. 17. "I was extremely nervous and passionate and lacking in self-control. Alternately I would sin because of weakness and then brood spasmodically over my depraved nature. At times I came to the conclusion that I could never be good and there was no use to try; then usually a long attack of conscience twinges would follow." Sometimes the reporters say expressly that they did not follow a "particularly evil way," and yet consciousness of sin was extraordinarily strong in them.

While the child seldom realizes any lack of harmony between the religious and socio-ethical elements which have been imposed upon him by his environment, the adolescent clearly recognizes the contrast between his real and his ideal life; and it is the consciousness of this contrast which may so embitter those of a nervous or even sensitive disposition and which has such a depressing effect upon their earlier years. And even natures that are not actually religious, like D's, for example, are sometimes laboring under a consciousness of guilt. In many cases when there is no sufficient sexual cause, no doubt actions considered as sexual deficiencies by the prevailing moral code arouse an especially severe feeling of guilt and sin. The moral and religious storm and stress often ends with the

[5] Starbuck, p. 61f.

experience of conversion or "regeneration," receiving "grace" or gaining "assurance." According to William James [6] all these are "phrases which denote the process gradual or sudden, by which a self hitherto divided, and consciously wrong, inferior and unhappy, becomes unified and consciously right, superior and happy in consequence of its firmer hold upon religious realities."

But sometimes even after the experience of pardon, complete harmony between duty and desire, between the moral and the instinctive fails to appear; Anton Reiser's father furnishes an example of this, for his son says that a "continuous wavering back and forth" was characteristic of him up to his fiftieth year. Especially active is the religious and moral ferment wherever different kinds of environments influence the youth. This happens whenever in workshop or office opinions belittling or denying religion come into opposition with the religious influences of the family and widen still more the chasm in the mental life of the adolescent.[7] Actually not until the end of his period of puberty does he find the courage to make a decision; slowly he has formed his religious conviction, on the strength of which he rejects what is not suited to him or is alien to his nature.

[6] James, p. 189.

[7] What Schopen (p. 76) calls "Self portrayals" offer examples of this.

CHAPTER IX

AESTHETIC INFLUENCES IN RELIGIOUS DEVELOPMENT

THERE are people who remain a stranger to any consciousness of sin even in youth. The American religious philosopher, F. W. Newman, expresses this fact with these words: "God has two families of children on this earth, the once-born and the twice-born." The once-born or "healthy-minded" as James calls them, are not troubled by moral doubts, and intellectual doubts do not particularly stir up their inner life. The religious development of these healthy-minded proceeds peacefully and continuously, it is a gradual harmonious inner growth. If the direction of the development remains positive, the healthy-minded love the kindly Father in God, the Creator of the most beautiful and best of all worlds, whose favored children they feel themselves to be.

If this development takes a negative turn, then the relinquishment of child faith proceeds painlessly, often unnoticed. Joy in the world, belief in everything beautiful, great, and good distinguishes the once-born "unbeliever." E, who describes himself as a monist, appears to belong to these; he confesses: "When on a journey I see the beautiful countryside or gaze into the sky, or look into the water, or observe animals, or study the planets, then something holy comes over me, and I feel the infinitude of nature extending into

the great and into the small; these are my meditations in the free majestic cathedral of nature. Then the spirit is not confined in cold damp walls as it is in church. And out of my meditations, out of this absorption in nature, I gain strength, courage, and pure inward joy."

Credulous, healthy-minded, among whom we may count A, are just as susceptible to the greatness and beauty of nature, which they always conceive as God's creation. Thus, with A, his impression of the sea culminates in the exclamation, "O, Lord, how wonderful are thy works!" [1] Of kindred nature, the ritualistic service of the Catholic church exercises a special effect on the once-born believers. Surely the "sick souls" are susceptible to art's influences too, but for the healthy-minded they appear to be the most effective factors. In many experiences of the latter it is beside the point to ask whether they are of an aesthetic or a religious sort; perhaps that is true, too, of the devotees of nature, as described by E, who play an important rôle in the present youth movement.

An extraordinary intensity of the accompanying feeling is characteristic of the religious experience as well as of the aesthetic, and these naturally increase the difficulty of distinguishing sharply between the two. Nature worship is interpreted off-hand as a religious experience by one for whom as for A. Messer everyone is religious, "for whom there are heights and depths of reality which he faces with awe; yes, everyone for whose feeling and wishing there are values which are higher than his comfort and welfare and his profit." [2] In contrast with such conceptions, it should

[1] See p. 48.
[2] Messer, p. 166.

be pointed out that the appreciation of art like that of natural beauty is always an *experiencing of the beautiful, which is enjoyed for its own sake.* No question about the reality of the thing experienced is asked. On the other hand, in religious experience the existence and reality of the Deity is always presupposed, and for the devout nature is always a likeness, symbol, or expression of Deity. When E, who has completely broken away from belief in the Church admits that besides his "dry monism" he still has a "deep awe and admiration for nature," and speaks of a worshipful mood, it seems to me to indicate a longing which in the last analysis is after all still religious.

Like every striking experience the religious, too, strives for a corresponding expression. The simple, sober form of diary notes no longer satisfied youth for experiences which carry with them the tone of the Majestic and Holy One. Strictly speaking there is no adequate expression for the deity and every word that is used means an incarnation and therefore a foreshortening; yet to worship Him silently, as a consistent mysticism demands, is opposed to the storm and stress of the youthful soul. Through an exalted, poetic language, the youth tries to express his experience of God, though the experience of the break with God is also usually expressed in poetic form. If on the one side art is the means which lends suitable expression to the greatness of the religious life or even causes the inexpressible to be felt, on the other hand, for the youth with his lively fancy and his tendency toward extremes, there is a danger that in the fervor of language the originality of the experience may be lost or distorted. For that reason religious veracity appears to be particularly threatened. And in many cases it

can hardly be said whether the attitude which gave rise to the poems was aesthetic or religious.

When we turn to the content of the poems, we recognize in the literary productions of younger children a simple repetition of biblical stories and ecclesiastical dogmas. Significant of this are "A Church Song" [3] and the poem "The Entire Old Testament" [4] of a seven-year-old boy. In these and similar productions there is no trace to be found of a characteristic or personal religious point of view. In the poems of older boys and young men, published by Giese, the negative direction of development appears conspicuously beside the positive. The ingress of the intellect is noticeable in the following lines:

> There are no miracles,
> You can be told,
> The only miracle is man's strength,
> So fight against all gods;
> Be Titans, be sons of Prometheus,
> Be men, as is fitting for you.

This tendency toward the titanic, toward excessive elevations of the ego does not appear so prominently in the simple and objectively kept diary notes as it does in the poems. The adolescent imagining himself a Titan sees himself directly opposed to God, as the poem of an eighteen-year-old, styled "Confession," shows:

> Come, let us live,
> Free of the Godhood,
> Free of religion!
> We are almighty
> We shall live always
> In spite of the Lord God.[5]

[3] Giese, Nos. 12 and 13.
[4] *Ibid.*, No. 159.
[5] *Ibid.*, p. 192.

The titanic consciousness, which represents the most extreme antipode of the feeling of religious dependence, is further found in the poems called "Vision" [6] of a thirteen-year-old, "First Poem" [7] of a sixteen-year-old, and "Man" [8] of an eighteen-year-old; likewise it is shown by the closing lines of F's "Striking a Balance." [9]

Not a single one of the literary productions of feminine authors published by Giese contains "titanic" traces. The positive direction is not generally maintained in girls' poems, and the intellectual element tends to disappear. All the more strongly do the feeling or emotional situations appear. Erotic traces are clearly recognizable in the poem "My Beloved" (Christ) [10] of a ten-year-old girl and "Longing" [11] of a poetess alleged to be still younger. Charlotte Bühler has already questioned these statements about age and spoken of "puberty-longing." [12] Some of the statements of age furnished by Giese seem to me to need verification, and I likewise consider it premature to assume a climax of poetic production as early as the thirteenth or fourteenth year.[13] At any rate, the authors of the manuscript material at my disposal did not until later years reach the point of expressing their religious thoughts in verse. F reports that his first poem appeared before his eighteenth birthday; B, D, and L did not compose poems until after the end of the fifteenth year; K's religious poems were begun in

[6] *Ibid.*, p. 62.
[7] *Ibid.*, p. 179.
[8] *Ibid.*, p. 144.
[9] See Appendix, p. 120.
[10] Giese, p. 213.
[11] *Ibid.*, p. 209.
[12] Bühler, p. 86.
[13] *Ibid.*, p. 84.

the eighteenth and nineteenth years. Just as Charlotte Bühler assumes, the climax of poetic creation is not reached in young men until after the eighteenth year.

A fragment of a prose poem written by K in his twentieth year expresses his own religious thoughts through an ancient hermit. The recluse says: "Thousands of stars were sparkling in the canopy of heaven which turned my thoughts above, to heaven, to God. And then I fell down on my knees and out of my overflowing heart I prayed to Him who lives up there for us. And so I found the Highest, Whom we can find on earth; so I found God! I found Him not through silence, I found Him through my own soul." The experience here described shows features which are typical of the religion of many adolescents: The youth discovers his own soul; it is his entrance to the kingdom of God from which it came. In K's poems this thought keeps recurring.[14] For B, too, his own soul is a great mystery which he tries to penetrate.[15]

The adolescent is clearly conscious of his own special existence, and at the same time he suffers from his loneliness.[16] In his friend he seeks the fulfillment of himself; but he is often disappointed, and then a hermit's life appears to him ideal. There is only One who never disappoints, the One to whom K prays: "O Father! Thou wast my only friend in my life's sorrows!"[17] A prose poem by B treats of the flight of a young man to the solitude of the primeval forest. Here the fugitive meets a very old hermit, who tells of his experiences in the loneliness, and challenges his young guest to turn back: "Man should not flee from

[14] See Appendix K 1, 2, 3.
[15] See Appendix B.
[16] *Neu Bahnen*, 1922, p. 101.
[17] See also Appendix K.

men, for only a brother brings another peace. . . ." The longing for solitude and peace of soul, which B and K express in poetry, is what earlier caused many a youth to become a hermit or a monk.

The thoughts of the hermit are turned to God by the contemplation of the starry sky. And this is another significant feature of the religious life of adolescence, that it is so strongly stirred by nature. In the verses of the adolescent as distinguished from those of a child there is seldom any hint that his religious thinking and feeling has received any special impulse through the church or other association, through history, literature, or individual personalities; next to nature, it is most of all the blows of fate, such as sickness (A, C), or the death of beloved persons, which most enrich the religious life. (It has already been mentioned that nature worship does not have to be unqualifiedly religious; the "Prayers to the Sun" [18] of a sixteen-year-old poetess and the "Death in the Mountain Wood" of B [19] may serve as further proofs of this.)

The prayer-verses of adolescence give us an especial insight into the nature of its piety; for in prayer we see with Friedrich Heiler the "central phenomena of religion," and we understand youth's religion best and most immediately if we know its prayers. While the prayers of sixteen-year-old B made thoroughly primitive demands, at eighteen they bear unmistakable witness of a spiritual growth. In K's beautiful prayer-poems we notice the climax of youthful piety. No self-seeking request for bodily welfare, only warm gratitude flows from his words:

[18] Giese, p. 238.
[19] See Appendix, p. 115.

O Father!
Thou wast my only friend in my life's sorrows!
Thou sentest me pain and anguish of soul
And knewest its worth.
I retreated into myself, and oft, when my woe o'ercame me
Thou wast near.
I felt thy sway when the clouds covered the sky,
And I found Thee when I could again behold the rays of sun.
Tears soothed my sorrow: I thank Thee that I found tears.
Thou permittedst me to feel deep joy when I could barely comprehend.
Everything comes from Thee,—the gloom of life and its sunshine.
And thus I feel Thy nearness, wherever I may be.
I love Thee, my Father, mine only merciful God.
Grant that I may enjoy the happiness of a pure heart!

Unconditional devotion to the Highest and a trusting acceptance of all that comes from Him speak out of this prayer. The same writer feels the immediate nearness of God in another of his poems:

I embraced Thee, my God,
In fervent prayer
Thou art so close to me,
That I hardly dare breathe.
I see Thee before me, my God!
Thou hearest my prayer,
And loosest my folded hands
And fillest them with blessings.

Here, sensations of sight, hearing and taste have become symbols to make the nearness of the deity very real; and thus nature in all her majesty and beauty is only the symbol of something incomparably higher and more exalted, which man only suspects but can never fully grasp or fathom.[20]

[20] Cf. K 3, Appendix, p. 82.

The answer to the question, what is genuine religious experience and what is only assumed, can be answered only by considering each case separately. Though K, like many youths, speaks rather frequently of his soul's sorrow and takes it too tragically, this nevertheless appears to me to furnish no reason for doubting his religious sincerity. On the other hand, the poem of the 19-year-old F, "In Church," [21] in which is expressed regret over his lost faith, is "not entirely genuine, but partly assumed," as the composer himself explains. The same is true of L's poems, in which the pleasure he finds in the rhyme and in the poetic image often overshadows the religious experience. Just as there are some youths whose religion assumes a particular character through intellectual and socio-ethical elements, so the narrow and often inseparable union of the religious and ethical experience is typical of others. Schleiermacher's beautiful saying holds for them: "Religion and art are close to each other, like two friendly souls whose intimate relationship, although they feel it, is nevertheless unknown to them.[22] Indeed the pedagogy of religion does not seem to have adequately recognized the significance of the artistic for religious training.

[21] Appendix, p. 121.
[22] Schleiermacher, p. 105.

CHAPTER X

YOUTH'S "FIRST" RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCES

ONLY in exceptional cases may we speak of childhood religion. In general, however, it may be said that a real religious experience may have its start at that time. For as the child regularly imitates those about him in language and gesture, so he also adopts the thoughts and forms of religious tradition. Not till adolescence may we assert that there are evidences of real religion. Just as the opportunity to study and criticize works of art which comes toward the end of childhood either may develop one's appreciation to a really artistic level or may stifle it,[1] so aside from other influences, the intellectual milieu of youth brings about religious changes which may proceed in a positive or negative direction.

With what processes or occurrences are youth's first religious impressions connected? The diary-notes and verses contain no clear account. The literary productions disclose something of the course of the development, the factors influencing it and its goal; but of the beginnings no adequate observations can be made. In order to recognize the first religious impressions, and the experiences in relation to which they appear, and at the same time to determine how far the development has advanced at a certain age, the

[1] Cf. Kupky, *Beobachten über die Entwicklung des Formen.* Z. f. *angew. Psychol.*, Bd. 12, S. 186, 189.

descriptive method, used up to this time, was abandoned. A questionnaire was prepared for the completion and expansion of the observation-material already at hand.

In six classes of higher vocational schools for girls in Leipzig the fifteen- to sixteen-year-old pupils were assigned the theme topic, "What Arouses My Reverence." Because the expression "reverence" was not entirely familiar to some of the girls, the following suggestions were given them: "In a church hymn the writer sings of Christ's birth: "When I try to understand, my spirit kneels in reverence." A similar feeling the poet Geibel expressed in his "Morning Stroll"; he tells how everything awakes in nature, and "then adoration flows like a breath through all my senses." As in nature or in the house of God, our reverence may also be aroused through art or through events in the life of people. You (the girls in the school) are expected to report whether you have ever experienced anything of the sort."

No further directions were given; an effort was made to avoid any possible copying or exchange of ideas on the part of the girls. Thirty-five minutes were allowed for working out the answer. Altogether 148 themes were handed in in the six classes. Of these twenty, almost a seventh, were in no way related to the assignment; since this appears to have been thoroughly explained, it may be concluded that some of these pupils had never yet experienced reverence. Some did not answer the assignment, probably purposely, in order not to lay bare an experience that is in their minds veiled in mystery and holiness. And among the girls who answered the question, doubtless some told this experience with reserve. Naturally a prerequisite

for even partially satisfactory returns from questionnaires in school classes is that the pupils have confidence in the questioner; but even then the sources of error appear to which I have already referred.[2]

Only a few of the 128 papers which contained clear answers showed any traces of religious experiences of a deeper sort; the style flows in the usual form and the note of feeling is seldom heard. When Stanley Hall writes [3] that on the basis of observations carried on for years he has arrived at the conclusion which surprised him and which is contrary to the common belief that the "budding girl" is utterly unreligious, he may have exaggerated the case, but at least there is no proof to the contrary to be found in these papers. Stanley Hall's assertion contradicts the experience of Mrs. Adolf Hoffman-Genf, who is one of the few who really know and understand girls.[4] Elizabeth Jaekel [5] similarly disagrees; she writes that the "only spiritual interest" of country girls in Christianity is what they bring with them. In her opinion there is in this respect a difference between country and city youth. It can hardly be doubted that environment exercises a decisive influence on the religious interest. Not till later years, according to Stanley Hall, are girls supposed to be susceptible to religious experiences, and even then young men surpass them.

If we now turn to the answers given to the questionnaire, it appears that 68 out of the 128 point to nature and its phenomena as the thing that awoke their reverence; here fundamentally religious and unreligious feeling for nature cannot be sharply distinguished.

[2] P. 17.
[3] Stanley Hall, *Educational Problems*, II, p. 21.
[4] Frau A. Hoffman, p. 16.
[5] E. Jaekel, p. 19.

Since the girls who answered the question are, with few exceptions, children of large cities, who by experience are not often in close touch with nature, it is somewhat surprising to hear what significance it has in their religious experience. One girl makes a report of a still winter night with a clear starry sky: "A feeling of great reverence came over me. I understood how God loves mankind. There one sees rightly how lowly is man and how grateful man should be to God." Another girl writes: "My heart throbs with deep emotion. It seems to me as if I were borne away into a better world. A feeling of holiness comes over me. I fold my hands and gaze reverently up to the sky, which is brimming over with stars." Next to the starry heavens the quiet of the woods is significant for the arousal of religious feelings; one report reads: "A feeling of dread came over me, and at the same time the question arose: Who made all this? Was it reverence that came over me? I almost believe so. At that moment I became a better person. But the feeling lasted but a moment."

In some answers God is thought of as thoroughly human: "But how wisely everything is arranged. . . . Everywhere we recognize the hand and finger of God." Nature awakens recollections of the Bible: "God made the whole world. First there were two persons, now they are countless." While in the examples already given, the Creator of the world is looked up to, in others He does not appear, and nature as such seems to be working alone; thus we read: "There are times when man's heart is thronged with conflicting feelings, confused thoughts and sensations, when he is not master of himself. At such moments one has to go out into majestic, exalted Nature, to find in her

quiet greatness his balance of soul. When one becomes better acquainted with Nature and better understands her wonders, a deep reverence comes over him." Another says in describing a sunset: "As I was listening to the slowly dying tones of the bell, I became conscious of how small and insignificant we are in this world, and how we are almost nothing in all the greatness; for I saw how much life Nature really conceals in herself and with what majesty everything is created. It was the first time in my life that I was ever so meditative and so melancholy."

Far behind nature, that is in only 31 out of 128 cases, were ecclesiastical forms and ceremonies named as the thing that awoke reverence. Protestant girls reported of their confirmation, that it awoke "holy feelings." "I do not know how it happened that the church seemed so different to me from before," writes one pupil. Another (not in the same class): "The wide room had about it something holy and solemn." Still another wrote: "After walking up to the altar and partaking of the Lord's Supper, a peculiar feeling came over me. For a long time I was plunged in deep thought, and all day long I thought about this serious and solemn act." Not one of the Catholic girls present in the classes mentioned nature; they all reported on the powerful impression which their first communion had on them. In contrast with the usually very animated descriptions of the first communion,[6] in which the aesthetic effect of the Catholic form of worship plainly appears, the reports of the Protestant girls on the effect of confirmation and communion seem somewhat unenthusiastic.

In the third place, in 18 cases, the life and fate of

[6] Cf. Appendix, p. 130.

man are given as the events through which reverence is aroused in young girls. One says of an old woman, a widow, whose son fell on the field of battle: "You never hear a complaint from his mother. She bears her lot so calmly that one cannot but have an involuntary feeling of reverence of her." Another pupil describes an occurrence that agitated her deeply: "A woman jumped out of a car while the train was in motion; a soldier jumped after her, but he was killed." One's own, or a parent's illness is sometimes cited. One girl reports of the death of an aged relative: "I have stood at other biers, but I have never been so strongly moved as at this one. I think that comes from the fact that till now I had never really understood what death means, and this taught me the deepest reverence for God."

In the last place, in 9 cases, art is named as the power which wakes reverence; but it is immediately apparent how closely the aesthetic and the religious attitude are connected, and how hard it is to draw a line between them. Of the effect of the playing of the organ in church one writes: "It seemed to me as if another spirit were ruling in me." Another pupil writes: "Recently when I was attending one of Schubert's symphonies and hearing the notes rolling over each other, a feeling of reverence overcame me for Schubert's great spirit." Next to music, it is painting which arouses reverence; the art of poetry was not mentioned. One of the pupils writes of the Sistine Madonna: "In the picture the painter has expressed all his reverence for the Highest, which is so forcefully conveyed to the beholder that he cannot but remain standing before it. This is what happened to me. I call that reverence." Similarly a pupil in

another class writes: "I could stand for hours before many beautiful paintings. They contain so much beauty and arouse in me the most varied feelings. With reverence and admiration we look on them (the great masters) and their work and cannot imagine how a man can create such beauty." These words show that we may class the last group with the preceding: not only the noble man, but also the creative one, bears in himself the godly, and is to us like that example and pattern, "the unknown and higher Being whom we divine."

To be sure, reverence represents only one phase of religion, but from this point we can take a general look at the awakening of the religion of adolescence. It is evident from the answers to the questions how beauty and the exalted in nature and art may bring about a religious experience. Now, according to Schleiermacher, external nature does not form "the inner holy of holies," but only the "outer vestibule" of religion; and neither the forces, nor the beauties of nature, nor even the world's wide expanse speak to the religious sense," but the orderly coherence of the world. Still it appears as if youth had to enter the outer vestibule [7] in order to reach the holy of holies.

We possess evidence of this from Schleiermacher's own youth in the description of a boat trip in the autumn of 1786 at the time when he and other "independent thinkers" were having a violent conflict with their pietistic teachers.[8] In an enthusiastically written essay young Schleiermacher thanks Providence, "which formed this beautiful nature and placed in my soul susceptibility to all the beauties of her creation," and

[7] Schleiermacher, p. 50 (78).
[8] Meyer, p. 213.

his eye feeds on the wonders of nature "from the bright star to the lowly, despised blade of grass." These are the same notes that we hear in the reports of the school girls.

The aesthetic factor is recognizable also in the second group of reports, when they tell of the effect of organ-playing, congregational singing, or the broad and high spaces of the church. Then ethical thoughts are awakened by confirmation and communion, which blend with the religious. We read: "When I was standing before the altar, the consciousness came over me that I had not yet completely fulfilled my life"; or "I could not help thinking that I had not always obeyed my parents and teachers." In nature the thought of one's own unworthiness sometimes appears; but one does not then feel himself really conscious of guilt, but only "small and lowly."

According to Schleiermacher, the inner life of man is supposed to mean much more to religion than external nature: "for in the inner life the universe is copied and the outer is comprehensible only through the inner." Above all, the Eternal is recognized not in ourselves, but rather in the human association. "In order to look upon the world and to be religious, man must first have found humanity," [8] both in the associations of the present and in history.

Did the girls find traces in themselves of true reverence toward man which, according to Goethe, is a "higher interpretation" of human nature? Not in many cases; but yet in a few it appears as if the meeting with a particularly distinguished individual had been the starting point for a religious experience. On the contrary, there are no evidences that mankind as a

[8] Schleiermacher, p. 56 (89).

whole or the history of mankind awakened religious thinking and feeling. Cessation of intellectual activity, the significance of which for development has already been referred to, does not especially appear in the answers; that is due, in part of course, to the choice of theme.

By way of summary, certain conclusions may be drawn concerning religious thinking in the narrower sense. Only in a few cases was God thought of in human form; a "spiritualization" of God had already taken place in most of the girls. Furthermore, even the thought of a personal God receded. That is no accident. Influenced by an environment which rejects the faith of the church, many girls came to a rejection of the concept of God which had been taught them in their religious instruction. In the romantic feeling toward nature that is expressed in some of the themes, we have to notice a sort of substitution for the religious longing, which is in others. It appears from the questionnaire that the "first" religious impressions are often connected with aesthetic experiences; and moral experiences may incite religious. On the other hand, intellectual experiences, which are not accompanied by intensity of feeling, appear to share only slightly in the awakening of religion. In many cases, blows of fate, such as severe sickness and death of a member of the family, cause the first lasting religious impressions.

CHAPTER XI

THE MAIN OUTLINES OF RELIGIOUS DEVELOPMENT

WHEN we are speaking of the religious development of adolescence, we do not imply that the religious function is isolated and develops independently. In reality, the whole personality of a young person grows, and with it his religion. Still, the observation of religious development furnishes a remarkably clear insight into the beginning and growth of the youthful personality. In religion a person seeks to grasp at once the first source of all being and the height of all worth; and so, in youth's struggles for the deepest and final meaning of existence, there is reflected the chaotic and Proteus-like quality, which is characteristic of the youthful spirit.

Religion is a complex function. Elementary spiritual processes are, to be sure, recognizable in religious experiences but religion cannot be deduced or understood from them, as a sum of its component parts. In the essence and fundamental character of religion, there lies something more that can never be explained from elementary processes.

The "first" religious impression contains in itself all of religion: God is seen as such in a moment of intense spiritual excitement; He "flares into being," as it were. In rare cases this happens as early as the end of childhood, but ordinarily not before the beginning of

puberty. One may not speak of religion in a child in the real, "fullest" sense. To the child God is always a man endowed with higher and mightier powers. The child feels himself the center of existence; experiencing God as the highest, incomparable worth is still denied him. For his future development, however, the "child's religion" is of greater significance. It fixes the inner eye on the awakening of real religion and gives meaning to the original religious experience. Thus religious teaching in childhood gains the significance of preparation and direction for the coming view of God. The first religious impression may be compared to the sudden appearance on the horizon of the end of the day's journey which is recognized as such because of the preceding preparation.

In the case of a child one cannot properly speak of "religious" development; religious instruction usually produces a thoughtless taking over of religious ideas; the child is highly receptive and accepts the religious like the other values of his environment because he has to. Youth finds out for himself, "spontaneously," the real meaning, the true significance of religious thoughts and values. He is not religious because he has to be, but because he wants to be. Therefore we may not speak of a religious development, of a steady growth from within, before adolescence. Religion is present in the first impression at the beginning of puberty, but it is not completely developed until the end of this period. In the beginning of development the religious experience is still entirely under the influence of the environmental society, and the first religious experiences have the form, moods, or feelings of worship, devotion, and reverence. Personal and conscious religious conviction, pervading and determining the young

person's whole spiritual life, seems to be the "goal" of development.

Criticism of the religious ideas and dogmas which the child has adopted may precede religious development through the influence of an environment of a different sort—one that is hostile to religion; but it may also check it. The child's criticism of religious thoughts is in itself not yet sure evidence that development has begun. Not till the consciousness awakes in the youth that religion has to do with matters which are of tremendous significance to his own life may his religious development begin; and as a result of this insight he is restless, oppressed with his own inadequacy and sinfulness. Only in rare cases does the development proceed gradually; generally its course is accompanied by violent emotions which are increased by the emphasis given them by many religious bodies (Methodists, for instance); at conversion there comes a sudden, though not always a permanent tranquillity. In contrast with these denominations, some churches favor the gradual course; but with them also it seldom takes place without inner conflicts and doubts. Since the "conversion" of young people is not attempted by these churches, a "mixed" course of development is what is found here; with increasing years the emotions lose strength, and gradually there comes a cessation of these states of excitement. The development may take either a positive or negative direction. The environment of the adolescent exercises a special influence on the direction of his development, just as it does on its course. Even when the development continues to be positively directed, it seldom proceeds in a straight line, but shows waverings, so that one does not with certainty recognize the real direction until at the end of adoles-

cence. Positive religious development, as Litt has already pointed out, teaches that it is never a question of simple acceptance of the tradition of the society, of a mere "assimilation," but of a "particularization," of the whole personal embodiment of faith.

Religious experience, as a specifically spiritual function, follows the individual conditions of growth. It cannot be shown that youth's religion is exclusively determined by physical or by mental factors. Sexual libido is surely not its root or controlling principle: love may bring a heightening of the religious life but it is nevertheless only one influence among others, no more important than the intellectual attitude. It is significant of the spiritual peculiarity of youth that different moods often combat each other and that harmony between them comes only at the end of the period of development. In the earlier years the inclination, characteristic of many youths, for clearing up an "intellectual doubt" has a predominantly analytical effect upon their religious thinking. But even then, when the development is in a completely negative direction, this can hardly be traced to the logical attitude of the individual alone, but likewise in part to a religious tendency that is weak in itself. When the religious tendency is strong, its development is hindered neither by contrary inner inclinations nor by an unreligious or irreligious environment. In the later years the same (i.e., logical) intellectual attitudes continue, while the particular content of the religious experience is conceptually expressed, and the structure of a religiously founded view of the world and life is reared.

In many cases, "moral doubts," raised by certain life experiences may influence religious development more strongly than the "intellectual doubt" which is

traceable in part to the enlightening ideas of "natural" or rational religion, and in part to youth's own scientific thinking. This "moral doubt" about religion and God's kindness and justice sometimes comes with such force that it gives the development a negative turn. When it leads to a long estrangement, it is the sign of a strong religious tendency which is made stronger through the consciousness of sin and wins inner tranquillity through the experience of divine grace. The "moral" type of religious youth, compared with the very intellectual and aesthetic, experiences a development particularly rich in emotions. Correspondingly, the religious development of aesthetically inclined natures proceeds most calmly, whether it pursues a positive or negative direction.

While the intellectual and moral factors have a particular effect on the course and direction of development, the "first" religious impression is acquired not only through sorrowful but also frequently through esthetic experiences, climaxes of youthful religion being often connected with experiences of the beautiful and exalted in nature and art. In his verses youth tries to give his religious thoughts suitable artistic expression. The youth's poetry and diaries show that his religion has the character of longing. In the literary productions which we consider particularly religious, as in the notes of B, C, and N, is told again and again the longing which is never entirely stilled for a richer and more complete life. In briefer form, a poem of the seventeen-year-old O expresses the seeking for the Highest ("When shall my yearning find its Lord?" [1] Not before the end of adolescence does the search for the value of all values find its fulfillment.

[1] See pp. 125-126.

Even though Bohne, like Starbuck, distinguishes three periods of development: "a first climax of religious life, a time of religious estrangement, and a second climax in which the religious development reaches its conclusion," this conception is not confirmed by the literary productions. The diary-notes teach, rather, that after the first impression, which awakens the sense of the holy and divine, the material of faith received in childhood is compared and strengthened by it. Doubts arise which are overcome by new religious experiences. These in turn are doubted, and further new experiences carry the development forward. This process, which is accompanied by so many periods of excitement and calmness, finally in the religious youth ends in the conviction that inner tranquillity comes solely by yielding to God. With St. Augustine youth admits at the end of his development: "Cor meum irrequietum est, donec requiescat, Domine, in Te."

APPENDIX

FURTHER ILLUSTRATIONS OF RELIGIOUS DEVELOPMENT

B [1]

19 years old.

GROWING SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS

I work and sweat
And hew my world.
And even yet.
If ruin swirled
Destruction sent,
My blood's cement.
But if it does not want to be,
Then let it crash
And bury me,—
My world of love.

17 years old.

PANTHEISM [2]

I would die in a mountain wood
In the evening's gold-lit pall
Outpouring my weary life
Into the silent All.
I would watch my bleeding songs die,
My fiddle smash on a tree,
Fling the songs to the serpents' dens
And woefully cry to thee.

[1] See p. 82.
[2] Pp. 82, 97.

Then thou, my mother, wouldst hear,
Wouldst hasten to cover me tight,
Wouldst rock me gently to sleep.
How I love thee, Mother Night!
Thou holdest me closer to thee
Embracing and comforting well,
Thou Brother Storm greet Lady Sun
And take her quickly my farewell.

18-19 years old.

SOUL [3]

O, my soul, plunge quickly, sink deep within thyself,
See whether in thy mirror gray (of consciousness) thou dost know thyself.
O, my soul, seek darkly in the sea (of consciousness) for thee
Whether thou mayest find myself and so be known to thee.
O my soul pray tell me, tell me more of thee—
O my soul pray bring thyself, O my soul, to me (to consciousness, to recognition).

C

LIFE EXPERIENCES AND RELIGIOUS THINKING [4]

18 years old. Diary notes. "A lingering illness has brought me farther toward religious feeling. I found my God, and I really considered as stupid persons like S, who once said to me after my sickness: I think you believe something. This conviction remained in me in spite of the anti-religious speech of Doctor N (the natural science teacher) in the *Quarta;* now and then I recognize the truth of such speeches, but that cannot alter my conviction one iota; I cannot live without religion. I remember those hours in the hospital, where I wanted to pray and could not. Lessing's thoughts correspond to my thinking: Not the circum-

[3] Cf. p. 96.
[4] See p. 83.

stance that a certain Christ lived 2000 years ago makes me religious, but the fact that thru him many are made happy."

Ethical Effects

18½ years old. "Many people ascribe to fate everything that they cannot explain. In such circumstances I come to the question: Why do they call it fate? Anyone, who admits there is such a thing as fate, can also call this power God. With the word fate many will have, I suppose, also, the idea of a person.

"I am not interested for myself alone, but feel myself compelled to help others, yes even want to strive to be able to help others. I pass harsher judgments than formerly on sermons and worship. At the promotion of the sixth class boys, E preached on Eph. 3: 16 about the inner man. The sermon is witness of the fact that Director E is not a deep-thinking, religious man. On the other hand, a service which the same conducted next day again stirred my religious thinking. It had for a text: Ascend."

19 years old. "For a long time I have not acknowledged God's son-ship (Jesus). Contradictions with natural science! I consider Jesus a wholly simple man of unusual tenderness, in whom there was a strong sympathy for all the sufferings of mankind. His relation to God is a peculiar gift. He appears to me to be for Christianity what Mohammed is for Islam. His greatness lies in His depth of thought and in the fact that He gives to so many peace of soul; He has really recognized the needs of the soul."

Thoughts about Dying

19 years old. Cause: death of a fellow pupil. "Why

should this splendid fellow just in the flower of his youth have to die? It is not difficult to find an explanation of that. He had lived a spiritual life, had thought much, had high ideals. He must often have thought: 'If only this wretched injustice and lovelessness were put out of the world!' The goals toward which he strove were more than the life of man. His death will make them (his teachers) think, who did him any injustice. If there is still any good in them, they will learn better. That this change is of advantage only to others cannot injure so high a character. With death he has attained what his braver thought pursued as the highest goal. My task will be to help the poor and miserable; if heaven should give me strength, the will shall not be wanting."

20 years old (during a sickness, to his parents): "If God should have decided differently for me, be satisfied with the certainty that His will rules us. His love can free men from their pain. We often sorrow for the loss of our kind, because we do not understand that the Lord God can accomplish good even thru Death!"

D

18 years old (against compulsion in religious matters).[6] "Prayer and repentance-day bells are decoying to church. This compulsion to go so regularly to church, is an everlasting, nauseous abomination. One sits there like an imbecile and stares at people who do not concern one at all; tries to sleep and seldom succeeds, out of sheer boredom sings a verse with the congregation, and sighing deeply goes home!—My letters home cause me much trouble—humbug—repentance day—desperation!

[6] Cf. p. 58.

19 years old (at the death of a friend): "Farewell! You were ours; we are thanking you while we are escorting you for the last time. Accept thanks for your songs! Perhaps I am the only one to thank you for just this, for I felt them very differently, I reveled, sang, loved, and drank. You were misjudged, but you are out of danger now, you whose soul once moved in harmonies; now your music is for the blessed realms on high. How often your playing pleased us; it was artistry, it was nature, it was laid in your cradle for comfort." (After the burial.) 'To be human, and to die, these belong together like water and the sea! Earth to earth. Dust to dust. Ashes to ashes!' We do not understand why you have to leave us now. And no Christ helps us, yesterday or today—you have to! Yes, I understand this 'have to' but I don't want to hear it from the mouth of the priest, for my God is different from what the preacher represented Him to me. Live your life, it is so fair and He who gave it is great and good!"

E

Description of One's Self

"Stimulated by my confirmation, I had begun to occupy myself more deeply with the Christian doctrine, and had succeeded so far that I believed in God. I imagined Him as a great spirit. In spite of many a struggle, I was tolerably complacent in my belief. But in the depths of my soul I was not satisfied. There were many doubts. I thought that with time I should reach inner peace and steadfastness of faith, because I fancied myself on the right road. I reached fifteen years of age. Then, however, a sudden revolution took place in me. Almost at the same time everything

that I had believed before was dissipated. I actually got hold of all sorts of books of information about earth and heaven and out of them all I created my new view of the world. I couldn't help seeing the emptiness of my former belief. Almost at once it went to pieces in me. I discovered that I did not stand entirely alone in my new opinion when I came to read the catechism of the monistic view of the world drawn up by the great nature investigator and scholar, Haeckel, who has but recently died. There I found assembled everything that I in the course of time had painfully collected piece by piece for myself!" [6]

F.

18-19 years old.

STRIKING A BALANCE

Of a better life beyond us
Let the people oft relate.
Thou believedst it in thy childhood,
Dreams—and chains—disintegrate.
For if thou wouldst learn to live here,
Fret not of Eternity.
If from out thy earthly body
Soars a spirit happily,
Wouldst thou, heaven-seeking mortal,
Earthly child of time and space,
Live a life that lasts forever,—
Thyself before God's throne abase?
Canst *thou* live the life there? Never.
And if in *other* form thou'lt be,
Whether *that* for Heaven be chosen
Shouldst thou have anxiety?
Cease thy searching for another,
In the present live thy life!

[6] See, further, p. 91.

Listen to thy inner voices,
Listen to the earthly strife
And of this world a member be.
Believe what thou dost do and see.

19 years old.

IN CHURCH

The multitude is hushed and still
The priest to the pulpit climbs,
Like marble upward turns his face,
Like a bell his full voice chimes
Word on word; and like a hymn
He speaks. As the organ peals
I knew that here there was a man
Who God as Father feels.
A gentle sadness filled my heart,
Which tried me many a day,
That shattered is my dream of God,
That I ne'er again can pray.

K [7]

1

Incomprehensible Thy ways O God!
With Thee near, joy and sorrow shake my soul.
For happiness and grief just as thou wilt
Thou givest men,—who know not why they live!
Atonement wouldst thou have them make for sin
Of which they guiltless are. They rise against
Thy dispensation, but they naught avail.
Yet gavest Thou them a soul to suffer grief,
And high and noble pleasure to enjoy.
Incomprehensible, eternal God:
Out of Thyself createdst Thou the soul!

2

Man's only true possession is his soul!
For everything that thrills an earthly heart

[7] Pp. 97-98.

Is idle emptiness! The selfsame hour
That pleasure brings doth carry it away.
But not so man's inseparable soul
Which only death alone is granted power
To bear from earth unto a better life.

3

How shall I ever fathom Thee, my God
In thy deep unfathomable meaning?
How shall I e'er the right solution find
Of when thou sendest joy and when distress?
Too full of brooding over what we are.
We think, and seek; and he who has found God,
Can he in his own power e'er more believe?

L

17 years old.

Just Pray [8]

For peace it was my heart did yearn;
I thought and read, but still forlorn
Because I feared it would not come.
I wrote a poem the morrow morn.
But greater grew my yearning hope,
I sought the out-of-doors that day.
Within a wood I found a church,
I entered in and read: Just pray!

17½ years old.

Diary

"Courage is the touchstone of thy faith."
"Doubt means to malign the welfare of thy soul."

M

Religion and Love [9]

18 years old. Diary. "Today we had an interesting debate in the class in religion. K (the teacher of religion) went a long way, as always, for he is gen-

[8] P. 99.
[9] On p. 69.

erally a fine fellow. He even went as far as Schleiermacher's formulation of what may be called religious. But for me that was much too little. I called religious all that moves a person to the deepest emotions, that makes him good. Thus, said I, one can be religious in his love even if it is for a woman. Of course, I could not say any more to him. Otherwise I should have added: Anyone can be religious in the moments of highest pleasure, when he completely receives the woman into his embrace. Of course K would not have understood. So we could not agree, and I suddenly stopped. But I am very sure of my formulation which came to me naturally while we were talking, for I had not thought on the matter before. And naturally every church refuses this conception of what is religious, for the church seeks valiantly for men who are not religiously inclined (see my friend L. F., theological student)."

N

15½ years old.

THE SOUL IS NOW FREE

The soul is now free
From earth's monotony.
All need hath now an end,
For God his peace shall send.
Is aught in death to daunt?
Freeing from every want.
All fears by then are past
The soul is ~~free~~ at last.

AT EVENING

(Dedicated to the Bible Class)

The day's work now is ended for today,
And it is darkening in the west.
While each now homeward wends his weary way,
Where he can find his welcome rest.

With God's help is the day's work fully done,
May God protect us from Dark's might.
So let us thank him for his favor won,
And pray He'll guard us through the night.

And even when at last life's measure's meted,
He will not let us be affright.
Then will he say: "It is completed,"
And light us on our way that night.
Thus in death's anxious somberness,
Jesus our Lord we shall behold.
In him we ever find true helpfulness
On earth as in the heavenly fold.

17 years old. "Blessed are they who have overcome the spirit, for they have saved their souls from death on earth. It is the spirit which denies God and the eternal life. It cannot rule where the heart, the living, true emotion has a right to be,—in religion."

17½ years old (incipient doubts). "You have to go inwardly bankrupt in order to find God. But there are people—and they are not the worst ones—who meet inward ruin, and do not find God. Who can help them?

18 years old. N is writing an autobiography. He reports in it about his joining a Bible class. "The B. C. made me a pessimist, for I considered every little mistake fatal, and impotently comforted myself with the expiatory death of my Master. . . . I remember one Sunday. The activities of the world disgusted me. I had the feeling: It is all evil. And a dismal anxiety seized me. What all of a sudden had become of my faith? But I clung desperately to the B. C., and tried to bring my friend [whom he had found] to the Savior. What a fool I was! We talked all day about religion. I was deeply moved and sad, that he could not agree. He was a free man and youthful. He

declared that life is joyous and that he did not understand sin in the sense that I did." For about two years N remains under the consciousness of sin; in his despair he is near suicide. He finds another friend with whose help he attains a view of life that is comforting to him; "That my friend believed in me, gave me strength. And with the awakening of nature I, too, awoke to life. My friend and I go out alone. We live, we love nature. Feeling is victory. I love life.

No one here can ever rob me
Of what insight deep doth give,
Of my simple faith, and childlike,
That within my soul doth live.
Thus comes reconciliation
With dissensions of mankind,
Let the scoffers hurl derisions,
Here thou joyfulness canst find.
And his guilt is him forgiven
Who feels deeply, purified,
And who finds in nature's kindness
All his yearning pacified."

Later N came back to the Bible Class; the 19-year-old seems to have finally overcome the consciousness of guilt and sin, that troubled him in his early youth.

O

17 years-old.

RELIGION AS YEARNING [10]

Dark Night—Splendor of the stars.
From afar the sound of bells finds its way to me.
Now it is near, now far away.
Ever near—and yet so infinitely far;
And Thou, O God! I seek Thee!
Ah, no!

[10] On p. 113.

Only a gentle yearning stirs my soul,
For whom is it meant? God,
Who are Thou?
And as I wandered thru the starry night—
A voice behind me called:
"'Tis I—'Tis I, Whom thou
Hast sought in many an hour."
There is fulfillment for every yearning.
"It is I. I am the firmness for thy
Uncertainty. Wouldst thou find Me,
Wouldst thou join the battle I require,
Wilt thou venture it?"
I spake: "Yea, Lord, I hear Thee.
I believe! Now have I found Thee.
I know Thee. And Thou art mine forever.
And can I be entirely healed of Thee,
I will be Thy faithful follower.
Why shall I still strive
To be one with Thee?
For Thee, and yet not to win Thee."
For a single hour gave me what I sought.
Then spake the voice: "Ah, no!
Until now hast thou naught but knowledge of Me,
And, mayhap, belief.
But thou art not yet one with Me.
For me thou must still fight;
Thou standest at the entrance, at the portal
Where thou sawest Me, where thou hast
Willingly received My words.
Now take on thyself a heavier burden."
Thus spake the voice.
And a gentle zephyr stirred. And all at once
Sounded the bells more loudly
And the voice was lost on the wind.
And again sounded the bells now near now far away
O woe—
When shall my yearning find its Lord?

18 years old.

My hands are cold and dead,
But when Thy will inspires
Blood flows and they grow red:
They raise cathedral spires.
O God, Thou still small voice,
Thou great Infinity,
How can I comprehend
Thee, Thou Eternity.
Child, Seer, Thou Limitless
How Named art Thou, Nameless?

I feel and know thou art,
But lose the way to Thee.
If me Thyself didst choose,
Oh show Thyself to me.

MAN

If only impulse dark from me would fall
And I erect could stand,
On up to my high destiny I'd gaze,
Yearning from the land.
But I am so bound
With chain and hook
That every look
Ope's a new wound.
I have no strength alone.
Man himself is weak.
'Tis Thee, O God, I seek,
Creator of Thine own.

18½ years.

O God Thou art a mighty sea,
An endless time, a towering height,
How helplessly I seek for Thee!
Art Thou far beyond my sight?

Willing are my fumbling hands
To perform Thy dear behest.
Empty now my yearning stands,
If in Thee I may not rest.

Behold, who can his task complete
If to his art he's not confined.
Why in eternal strife compete
If one no single stone can find?
Show me the stone for it is Thou.
That only it were squared by me!
Before Thee I abjectly bow.
O Holy One, I would build Thee. (Abbreviated.)

P

16-17 years old.

LOVE AND RELIGION [11]

"O Gertrude, if you could only comprehend my love! I am about crazy, and would like to leave the house at once; then again I feel so fortunate in the thought of loving you, and I beg God to turn your love to me."

(A few months later:)

"I dream myself ten years ahead, by your side your husband, a beautiful dream; who can fulfill it? God, Thou alone! O, grant that my love may not be extinguished, grant that it may be cherished by Gertrude's answering love for me! Amen."

PROTECTION AGAINST BLASPHEMY

"We have a social-democrat in our class, who will drive everyone distracted if he is not somehow made harmless. It is H. I have always considered him a free thinker, but not capable of such thoughts as he brought to light today. The fellow does not believe in anything any more. He treats religion with outright

[11] On p. 75.

contempt calling it mummery. He thinks we should ask God, if there is one, to blow the organ (in church) for him. But I hid my feelings from him, though he may be sure, altho I am not exactly his enemy, that I will report him later if as teacher he leads children astray."

19-20 years old. Diary. "I shall soon be twenty years old. And now it is time to be serious, which is not hard for me. I should like to assert first what I believe. But that is so difficult; too easily the next hour brings to nothing what is considered high and holy. Nothing is sure. I am not sure of myself or of anything else. I cannot avoid the thoughts and wishes that come to me that I should not have. Only God is sure. One can depend on Him, and even when they shout: there is no God—it is not true. I believe in God.

Four years ago I was confirmed. How immature I was then and I had to make such an important vow or rather confession, and that says and means even more—I often turned it over in my mind and read much about it. And I am happy that I can say again: I believe in Jesus—It is hard to find one's way among the varying views and thoughts. But faith is so beautiful—man cannot know everything—he is only a pitiful little creature. He would be lost without the kindly Leader above. How beautiful it is if one can live. Difficult only, if one says to himself that he must give account of everything that he does or does not do. The guilt soon becomes gigantic. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak. And how easily one is persuaded to do something that one in his heart would like to do—"

The First Religious Impression

Answer of a fifteen-year-old school girl to the question: "What aroused my reverence." [12]

"When I think of reverence, I always think of the day of my first holy communion—What a fullness of blessedness flooded my heart, as I stood at the window in a white dress and a myrtle wreath and looked out on flowering nature. I could not control my jubilant and rejoicing soul. From my overflowing heart rang out the song: 'Jesus, Jesus, come to me.'—Then I found myself in church and listened reverently to the words of the preacher. He pointed out how Jesus, the children's friend, had so loved the little ones. He told how pleased they had been when He lovingly drew them to him and blessed them. How happy must the children have been then! But we were a thousand times happier than they. Would that Jesus would just enter our hearts. As I meditated on this loving kindness, I became very reverent, so that I hardly dared breathe. And ever nearer came the time, when I was to receive my Lord and Creator,—Him, the holy, immeasurable God, who has such everlasting great love for us poor children. Then came the holy moment in which my soul sank in the sea of love. . . . But I cannot describe in words the feeling which I then experienced. Words for that are only poor, empty noise. There was in me a great fullness of blessedness and of holy, pure joy. Every fiber of my feelings belonged—to my Creator. At that moment I would have so liked to die. Die! O, it is no real death, it is only just the releasing of our poor body, in order that the soul thus freed may hasten back to the arms of its first Parent, its Creator." (Abbreviated.)

[12] See p. 103.

Superstitions in Youth [13]

(One of Many Newspaper Notices)

"In Berlin two girls jumped from the Schilling Bridge into the Spree. Someone succeeded in rescuing one of the girls; the other, a sixteen-year-old worker, Else Schmidt, sank quickly and was drowned. The two girls had recently been to a woman who told fortunes with cards, who said to Else Schmidt that a misfortune was coming to her. From that time the girl was obsessed with fear."

Eisenacher Zeitung, June 15, 1914.

[13] On p. 88.

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